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OR DAVE STOCKMA

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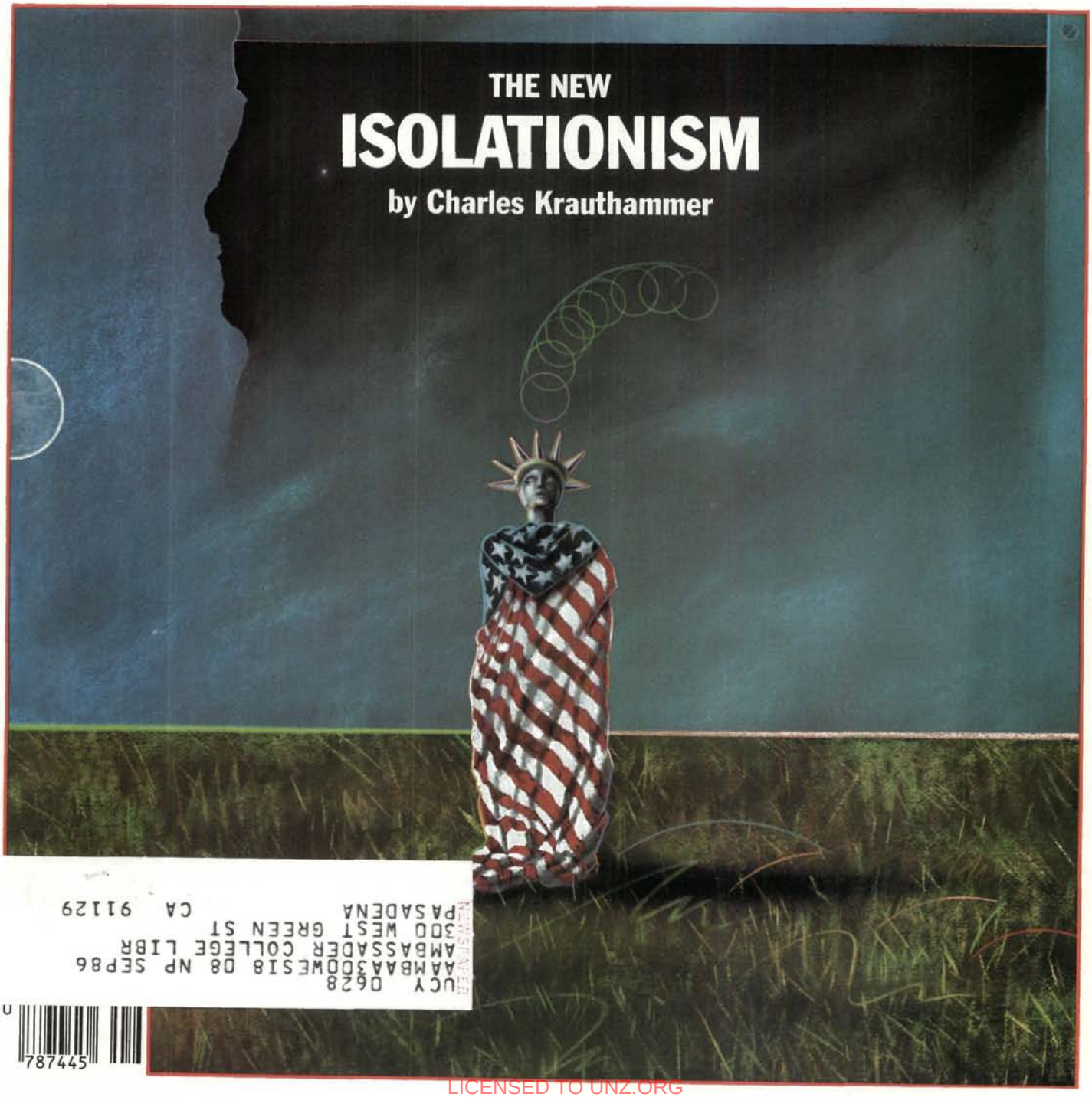

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To the editors:

The subject of Edwin Meese seems to bring out all THE NEW REPUBLIC's hidden reserves of bile and baloney. The latest piece of errant journalism is the attack in your February 18 Notebook on "the lawyers for Edwin Meese, led by prominent Republican Leonard Garment," for their legal fees, said by TNR to be a "ridiculous sum, ten times that sought by Hamilton Jordan." I won't fight "prominent," but I want to correct your characterization of me as a Republican—no doubt a pejorative category among your readers (i.e., greedy). I am a registered Independent. Second, there is no comparision between the sizes of the Jordan and Meese investigations. The Jordan investigation involved a single, discreet issue of fact—whether Hamilton Jordan used cocaine one night at Studio 54; the Meese investigation involved at least 13 complicated issues of fact, criminal law, and ethics jurisprudence.

You may be assured that my previous letter to TNR was not included in our charges, and this one likewise is *pro bono publico* in both the legal and literal sense of that term.

LEONARD GARMENT
Washington, D.C.

The editors reply:

Leonard Garment is best known as having been Richard Nixon's White House counsel. That he doesn't consider himself a Republican will be news to many.

THE PERPLEXING POOR

To the editors:

If you think it's broke, fix it. That, essentially, is the challenge fairly posed to conservative critics of Great Society programs by Leon Wieseltier ("The Poor Perplex," TNR, January 7&14). My challenge to Wieseltier is to read any of the following: *The Wall Street Journal* editorial page, the 1984 Republican Party platform, or any Jack Kemp speech on economics. He would find the alternative programs he asks for, including: the Kamp-Kasten tax reform, which would lop the poorest Americans off the tax rolls completely; enterprise zones, endorsed by Mondale and Reagan alike; the education voucher proposal; and Kemp's proposal to sell public housing units to poor families.

These are only a few of the creative ideas for helping the poor out of the safety net and onto an opportunity ladder. Such ideas will not wipe out poverty, but then, neither has AFDC or Head Start. Perhaps the best that can be said is that such proposals have engaged conservatives and liberals alike in a search for better programs. I hope THE NEW REPUBLIC will get engaged in this much more interesting debate. Let us compete to design a better poverty mousetrap, and Lyndon Johnson, adieu.

GREG FOSSEDAL
New York, New York

To the editors:

Leon Wieseltier's article on the Catholic lay letter on the U.S. economy is silly. There is a certain kind of posturing that is its own punishment: romantic isolation in imagining that only one's own self cares, has a heart, bleeds; and a Napoleonic stepping over the wreckage caused by one's own ill-begotten programs, with the proud boast: "It was the other guys who never cared."

In describing the lay letter, Wieseltier tries to associate it with Alexander Haig, Peter Grace, and William Simon, while hiding the role played in its drafting by academics and journalists such as James Q. Wilson, James Finn, Brian Benestad, Ernest Fortin, Robert Spaeth, and Ralph McInerny. The lay letter is certainly subject to criticism. But *not* to the two criticisms Wieseltier concocts: "All that remains is an irredentist individualism" and "the view that an unimpeded market automatically produces justice." The lay letter affirms the opposite of both views; it would take several pages of TNR simply to quote all the passages directly opposed to Wieseltier's wild interpretation. Nowhere does Wieseltier summarize the argument of the lay letter; nowhere does he analyze it; nowhere does he cite *even a single sentence* from it.

We who signed the lay letter are both Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives. We tried to identify what unites us as Americans, and to show how the American experiment has taught Catholic social thought lessons unknown to the Old World. In bragging about his own moral superiority, I wish Wieseltier had not falsified the moral vision of others.

MICHAEL NOVAK
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Wieseltier replies:

I specifically identified Jack Kemp as an exception to the conservative cruelty I attacked. But Fossedal cannot smugly hide behind Kemp from the rest of American conservatism (including the president). I did not summarize the argument of the lay letter because it seemed utterly vaporous, an unexceptional catechism about Catholicism and Americanism. More to the point, I did not cite a sentence from the lay letter because I did not write an article about it. My article was about a larger conservative tendency, of which the letter was a small part; and my citations from Novak were from his outburst on the Op-Ed page of *The Washington Post*, of which my criticisms were fair. Also I do not grasp that Michael Novak should scold others for "moral superiority." Has he read his writings lately? Such a feeling has been his stock-in-trade for years, and one of the first principles of the neoconservative consciousness. I do not mock the conviction with which Novak holds his views, and I would prefer if he did not mock the conviction with which I hold mine.

QUOTA QUESTIONS

To the editors:

Many thanks for Derek Bok's reply to the Glenn Loury-Charles Murray symposium on affirmative action ("Admitting Success," TNR, February 4). It is unfortunate, though, that none of the authors considered "means testing" affirmative action—that is, preferences only to the poor. Corporations, universities, and other institutions ought to weigh compassionately the applications of those who have been saddled with incompetent parents or subjected to inferior schools. But the middle class shouldn't merit sympathy. The son of a black accountant, or even a black bus driver, doesn't need society's coddling. A poor white boy from Tulsa does. Race-conscious policies, by definition, ignore crucial questions of income and class.

MATTHEW COOPER
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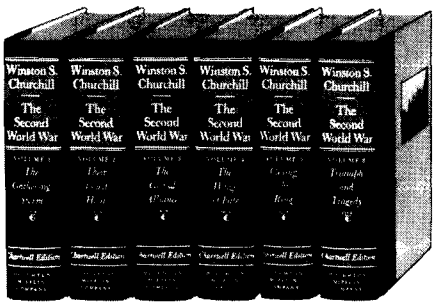

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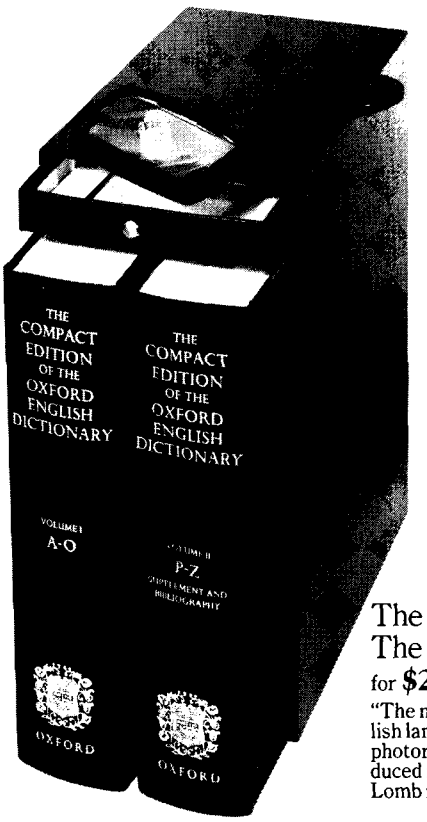

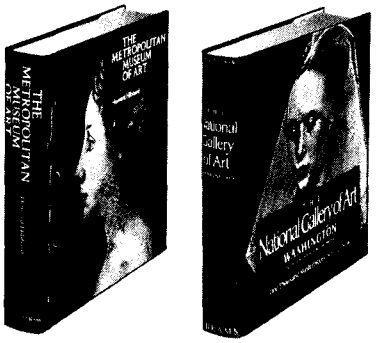

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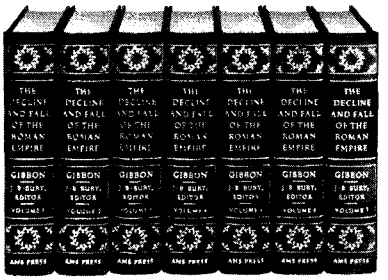

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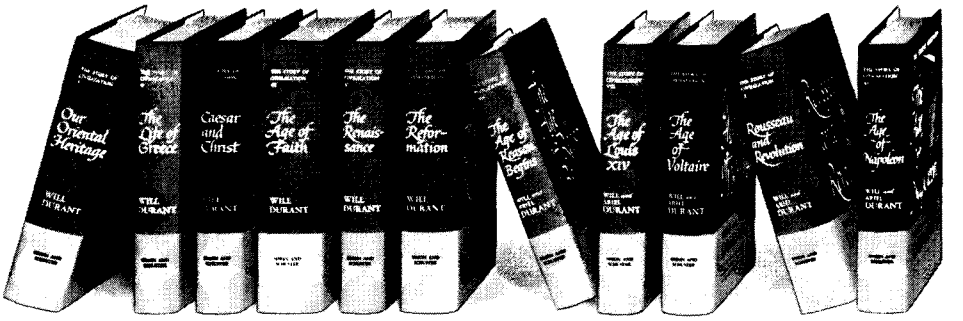

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2 **CORRESPONDENCE** ..... On the Catholic lay letter, quotas, &c.

6 **TRB FROM WASHINGTON** ..... THE SACRED SERVICE
One budget cut Reagan won't recommend.

7 **THE EDITORS** ..... THREE CHEERS FOR DAVE STOCKMAN
And a challenge for his boss and the Democrats.
NOTEBOOK
Democrats on TV, chess and Chernenko, &c.

10 **JEFFREY TOOBIN** ..... BETTER THAN BURGER
States' rights even a liberal can love.

11 **DAVID KEMPER** ..... MIDWESTWAY
Move the highway to Kansas City.

13 **EDWARD GIRARDET** ..... MIGRATORY GENOCIDE
Five years after the invasion, the Soviets make Afghanistan a free-fire zone.

16 **JERI LABER & BARNETT RUBIN** ... THE WAR IN THE CITY
In Kabul, a new Soviet society is created.

18 **CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER** ..... ISOLATIONISM, LEFT AND RIGHT
The tradition of isolationism in American foreign policy has found new partisans in the Democratic party and in the Pentagon.

26 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ..... ON FILMS: CHANGING WORLDS
A disappointment from Japan; *Shivers* from Poland.

27 **WILLIAM H. GASS** ..... SEINE AND SENSIBILITY
Young Rilke was poor but inspired in Paris. There *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* were born.

33 **ROGER ROSENBLATT** ..... A MAJOR MINOR POET
Collected Poems 1947-1980
by Allen Ginsberg

35 **DAVID J. ROTHMAN & SHEILA M. ROTHMAN** ..... PATIENCE WITH PATIENTS
The Silent World of Doctor and Patient
by Jay Katz, M.D.
We the Victors
by Curtis Bill Pepper

38 **LIONEL ABEL** ..... SONS AND MOTHERS
Aracoeli
by Elsa Morante
translated by William Weaver

40 **WILLIAM S. LIND** ..... READY, AIM, THINK!
The Pentagon and the Art of War: The Question of Military Reform
by Edward N. Luttwak

43 **BOSTON DIARIST** ..... SPEECHES TWO

COVER by Andrzej Dudzinski for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Article on page 18.

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FROM WASHINGTON

THE SACRED SERVICE

My office looks out on the Washington Palm Restaurant across the street. Every day between about 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m., a stream of lobbyists, lawyers, journalists, and politicians emerges from the Palm in groups. They pause at the entrance to gulp some fresh air, fiddle with toothpicks and cigars, and shake hands in consummation of whatever betrayal of the public trust was arranged over lunch. Then they go their separate ways. Thanks to an awning, my second-floor view of this ritual is restricted. I can only see the participants from the neck down. The challenge is to identify the paunches before the entire bodies emerge onto the sidewalk.

My favorite guessing game wasn't needed a couple weeks ago. There was no mistaking who was having lunch at the Palm. Directly in front of the entrance was a limousine with the vice-presidential seal. Behind it was a fierce-looking armored vehicle of some sort. Add a couple of cop cars and about half a dozen uniformed and plain-clothed agents standing around in the icy cold muttering urgently into walkie-talkies. Sure enough, George Bush emerged a bit later, waved to the crowd that naturally had gathered, and took off in a motorcade, sirens blaring.

"Secret Service" is the biggest misnomer in the federal government. It is the opposite of secret. Foreigners never cease to be amazed at the colossal apparatus of protection that surrounds top American officials. In Israel, where security concerns are no less serious, they take a very different approach. The cordon of protection around even the prime minister is far more modest, but officials' movements are not broadcast in advance. After noting that the vice president was right across the street, I had enough time, if so inclined, to go out and procure a—well, let's say a lemon meringue pie—and return to claim my place in history as he stepped out the door. And I would have had a good chance at him, too, despite all the protective paraphernalia.

Only the evening before, two TNR colleagues and I were jogging along a residential street not too far from the vice-presidential enclave when we suddenly noticed an eerie silence. No traffic. Then we heard the noise of a helicopter and found ourselves framed in a searchlight beam from the sky. Then there was the whoosh of a motorcade. Apparently this is now standard operating procedure whenever the second-in-command leaves his compound. It's hard to believe that until Walter Mondale, the vice president didn't even have an official residence. Hubert Humphrey lived in an apartment building. Spiro Agnew lived in a *hotel*!

In 1963 the Secret Service had 389 agents and a budget of about five million dollars. In 1980 it had 1,500 agents and a budget of about $150 million. Today it has 1,800 agents and a budget approaching $300 million. J. Edgar Hoover wrote shortly after John F. Kennedy's assassination: "Absolute security is neither practical nor possible. An approach to complete security would require the president to operate in some sort of vacuum, isolated from the general public and behind impregnable barriers. His travel would be in secret; his public appearances would be behind bullet-proof glass." Hoover was no democratic sentimentalist, yet most of the steps he found unimaginable have now been taken.

Of course 1963 was a more innocent era. But how about 1977? The high point of the Carter presidency may have come, unfortunately, on its very first day, when Jimmy and Rosalynn strolled hand in hand up Pennsylvania Avenue in the inaugural parade. That is unthinkable today. George Will remarked on television about Reagan's second swearing in: "It's a miracle to see power transferred or renewed without tanks in the streets." Well, maybe there weren't tanks, but there were surface-to-air "Stinger" missiles, among other security enhancements this year. Not only was President Reagan supposed to be encased in bullet-proof glass throughout his second inaugural, but all 140,000 invited guests were to have gone through metal detectors. (In the event, weather drove the proceedings indoors.) Even so, Robert Latta

continued on page 42

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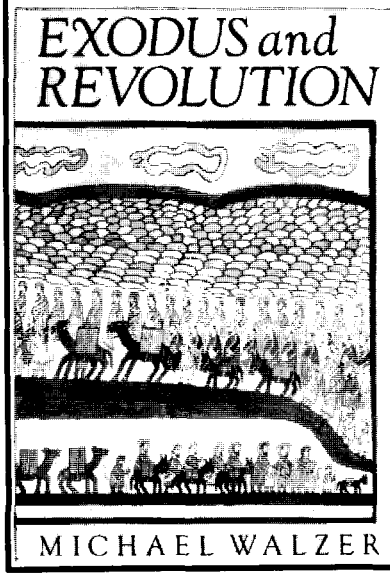

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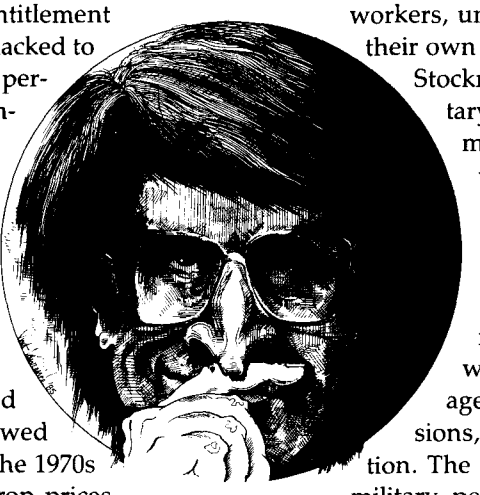
THREE CHEERS FOR DAVE STOCKMAN

Even if Congress raised taxes (which it probably isn't going to do), and even if it trimmed the military budget to a reasonable level (a somewhat likelier prospect), there would still have to be big cuts in domestic spending. Such is the relentless logic of $200 billion deficits. By any reasonable standard of equity, the middle class should bear the brunt of these cuts. Means-tested entitlement programs (welfare) already have been hacked to the bone. They now make up only 7.4 percent of total federal spending. Non-means-tested entitlements—programs such as Social Security and civil-service pensions—account for 35 percent of spending.



That is basically all that David Stockman was saying in his attack last week on three of the most sacrosanct federal benefits for the middle class: farm subsidies, military pensions, and student loans. Farmers who borrowed heavily to expand their production in the 1970s have been whipsawed by the lower crop prices and higher interest rates of the 1980s. Ten percent of all farmers may go bankrupt this year. But Stockman is right: "I cannot for the life of me figure out why the taxpayers of this country have the responsibility to go in and refinance bad debt that was willingly incurred by consenting adults"—especially when farmers have got $60 billion worth of subsidies in the last five years. The best agriculture program is a lower deficit. That would reduce interest rates and the value of the dollar, leaving farmers in better shape to sell their products abroad.

Stockman's plans are a prudent, even generous, way to wean farmers from the public teat. He wants a five-year phaseout of crop price supports, an annual ceiling of $20,000 on price-support payments in the meantime (to assure that subsidies go to the worst-off farmers), no more dairy price supports after two years, and no more payments for taking land out of production. But we'd still be spending $11 billion for farm income stabilization next year. We don't deny that hard times have hit the farm belt and that there is real and painful disruption. But no one proposes spending even one-tenth of $11 billion to help auto and steel workers, who have also been buffeted by the economic changes of the 1980s. And auto and steel workers, unlike the farmers, had no role at all in their own undoing.

Stockman's characterization of the military retirement program as a "scandal" may have been too charitable. People in the top fifth of the income scale receive 60 percent of these benefits, which add up to $17.8 billion in the 1986 budget. Recipients get 50 percent of base pay after 20 years' service, and 75 percent after 30 years. (No wonder the median military retirement age is 43.) Unlike almost all private pensions, these benefits are indexed for inflation. The Grace Commission estimates that the military pension program is three times more generous than the typical private pension. A lieutenant colonel with 20 years' service can collect more than half a million dollars before he dies—on top of whatever he makes in his second career.

The military says the pensions are "delayed compensation" for enduring a lifetime of military rigor and military wages, and that they help recruit and retain highly skilled personnel. Actually, the pension system encourages people to leave after 20 years, just as they reach the height of their skill and experience. Anyway, military pay is now quite decent, and most career soldiers spend their lives in an office, not a foxhole. A more sensible system would offer partial benefits without requiring people to serve 20 years, but would reserve full benefits for those who make the military their full career.

Under Stockman's proposals for student aid, no student could get more than $4,000 worth of grants and subsidized loans per year. Students from families making

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$25,000 or more couldn't get grants or work-study jobs. And those from families earning more than $32,500 wouldn't be eligible for any subsidized loans. Altogether, these cuts would lop one million students off the aid rolls, and save more than three billion dollars over the next three years. No one would be denied an education by these changes. Even students from the wealthiest families could still get government-guaranteed loans. They just wouldn't be eligible for subsidized interest rates. And why should low-income taxpayers subsidize the college educations of people who are already more fortunate than they are?

There are plenty of other painful but sensible middle-class cuts in the Reagan budget. No more free medical care for veterans who make more than $19,000 (savings in 1986: $361 million). An end to the billion-dollar-a-year postal subsidy that artificially lowers magazine subscription rates. (That one *really* hurts!) Good-bye to Amtrak's operating subsidy. A phaseout of the Small Business Administration.

President Reagan began his first term by proposing many of these same middle-class cuts, then backed away in the face of opposition from the Democrats. On the matter of cuts in programs for the poor, Democrats were not so noisy or so effective. The administration's latest proposals are another moral test for the Democrats. They can either use the budget debate to score a few cheap points with the interest groups whose cherished subsidies are threatened. Or they can at the very least stand aside and let the necessary work be done.

The bigger challenge, though, is to President Reagan and his party. Will they continue to hoard their political capital, or will they use it to put into practice their alleged principles? So far, Reagan has made no effort to help his man Stockman out. In a recent interview with *The Wall Street Journal*, he directly contradicted Stockman's views on military pensions. Reagan could have used his State of the Union address as an occasion to sell the country on the necessary sacrifices to cut the deficit. Instead, he offered another giddy explanation of how economic growth alone will cure the deficit—tempered by a few brief allusions to free-market farming, and such. The speech was great politics and lousy government. Will somebody remind the man that he's been reelected?

NOTEBOOK

□ NOT READY FOR PRIME TIME: "We want to show that rumors of our party's demise are premature," said Martin Franks, executive director of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the group in charge of the televised response to President Reagan's State of the Union Address. Unfortunately, like Konstantin Chernenko's shaky TV appearances, the broadcast only added to morbid speculation on its subject's health. The 30-minute videotape, written and produced by political consultant Ray Strother at a cost of $100,000, was billed as a frank attempt to confront the root causes of the Mondale defeat, and to reach out to the "Yuppie" vote. Most of the show featured barely articulate citizens engaging in aimless group therapy with even less articulate Democratic politicians. Everything about the production—from the hyped-up rock intro reminiscent of a year-old NFL highlights film to the tacky set to the shaky camera work—evoked a dreary, shopworn image. Jim Wright, the House majority leader, droned on and on, and no editor dared put him out of his misery. Wary of invoking traditional party principles, the Democrats wound up saying nothing at all. The vaunted soul-searching consisted of Arkansas governor Bill Clinton saying the party "knows it has to change," while Virginia governor Charles Robb admitted that "government simply can't do everything." At least Strother & Co. had the sense to edit out the sentiments of one Yuppie whose criticism of Reagan seemed to confirm the public's darkest suspicions about the real reason many young professionals support Democratic government activism. As reported by *The New York Times*, "Colleen Flannery, a law student, said that if government cut down on environmental regulations, it would be harder for her to find a job."

□ NEW REPUBLIC KREMLINOLOGY: We have another clue to the state of Chernenko's health. It's been lying right there, unobserved, in your local newspaper's chess column. It seems the world championship chess match—which to the Russians is like the Super Bowl—has been moved from the House of Trade Unions to a suburban hotel. The House is where the Kremlin leaders lie in state. When Dmitri Ustinov died a few months ago, they laid him there and the match had to be suspended for a few days. We say they are expecting more business. We give Chernenko three weeks tops. Remember, you read it here first.

□ IS HE ALL THERE? (CONTINUED.) In his State of the Union Address, President Reagan said, "The Treasury Department has produced an excellent [tax] reform plan whose principles will guide the final proposal we will ask you to enact." A few days later, while being questioned about some of the proposal's basic provisions by *Wall Street Journal* editors, Reagan admitted, "I haven't even made an attempt to study that bill in detail." The "detail" that has escaped Reagan's notice is that the Treasury plan would shift the tax burden, to some extent, from individuals to corporations. Since this is the single aspect of the plan that has generated the most noise from Reagan's own supporters, it's hard to know whether to laugh or cry at the revelation that he wasn't even aware of it. Curse you, *Wall Street Journal*! If only we'd been able to keep him in the dark a few months longer.

□ READERS MAY RECALL a Notebook item several weeks ago reporting on a speech delivered at a U.N. conference on human rights in Geneva last December by the Saudi

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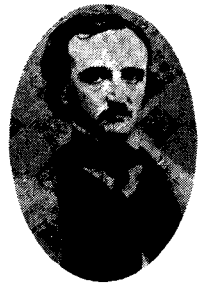

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Arabian delegate, Dr. Maarouf al Dawalibi (TNR, February 4). In this address, the Saudi human rights expert explained that anti-Semitism was a result of, among other intrinsically Jewish characteristics, the obligation of Jews to drink non-Jewish blood at least once a year. Dr. al Dawalibi, it turns out, is no novice at Jew-hating. In fact, he has been at it for two generations, and not just in the Arab world but as a servant of the Nazis. SS Obergruppenführer Erwin Ettel described him in 1943 as the Nazi Party's "Arab confidence man in Paris." The scholarly evidence suggests that he was a critical link during the war years between officials of the Reich and the notoriously pro-Nazi Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. So the question is: Why would the Saudis send to the conference someone who was not merely an anti-Semite, tried and true, but actually a Nazi henchman? The answer is that it does not embarrass King Fahd, around whom official Washington has been dancing solicitously for a week, to have such a man as his senior adviser.

□ THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "J. Edgar Hoover may have to move over to make room for Senator Joseph McCarthy (R, Wis.), who has declared himself a one-man Federal Bureau of Investigation. At a Lincoln Day speech in Reno, Nevada, he said he could name 57 card-carrying Communists on the State Department payroll. When he returned to Washington, he became even braver, charging that the Department harbors 80 subversives and that one other is a White House speech writer. Last week, still refusing to name names, McCarthy managed to delay action on the potato crisis until the Senate passed a resolution calling for an investigation of State Department employees." (The Editors, "McCarthy's Sacred Files," March 6, 1950.)

States' rights for liberals.

BETTER THAN BURGER

IN 1983 the United States Supreme Court upheld the California death penalty statute, which required that jurors be told before passing sentence that a life sentence might mean the prisoner could be released someday. Opponents of the death penalty reacted with resignation to another Burger court rejection.

But this time the story did not end there. The defendant pressed his challenge in the California courts, and in November 1984 the California Supreme Court struck down the statute as violating the California constitution. This saved as many as 100 inmates on California's death row who had been sentenced under the old formula. It also demonstrated an increasingly successful tactic of the civil liberties advocates who have failed so regularly before the Burger court.

The states' power to expand these rights is an undisputed aspect of the American federal system. Until recently it was also unimportant. Under our system, the decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court set a minimum standard. Any state action less protective of individual rights is automatically unconstitutional. But if a state interprets its own constitution to provide for *more* protection than the federal Constitution, that is perfectly legal.

Interestingly, on the subject of civil liberties, California's constitution contains almost exactly the same words as the U.S. Constitution. So do most state constitutions. Thus, in a purely theoretical world, there would be no difference between federal and state law. But flesh-and-blood judges don't work that way. Judges' philosophical outlooks, political and otherwise, can't help but shape what they see as "logical." And ironically, the progressive state judges take their cue from President Reagan, whose "New Federalism" rhetoric has reinvigorated the notion of the states as laboratories of democracy.

When Earl Warren was chief justice, the rising tide of constitutional protection lifted all states. Under Warren Burger, that tide has ebbed. But in states where progressive governors have appointed the state's highest judges, the courts have not been reluctant to try and restore what the current Supreme Court has said is not essential. Over the past decade Brendan Byrne in New Jersey, Jerry Brown in California, Michael Dukakis in Massachusetts, and Mario Cuomo in New York, among others, have appointed independent and aggressive judges who have helped to transform the reputation of state courts. Many of today's state court judges were in law school during the Warren years. As Chief Justice William R. Richardson of the Hawaii Supreme Court has said, "We're still following the Warren and Brennan opinions because they're heroes of ours."

Even in several western states not normally thought of as liberal, the strong native streak of libertarianism has produced rulings that protect individuals from the government. Courts in Utah and Montana, for example, have trimmed back the broad latitude the Burger court has given police officers to conduct search and seizures, and the Alaska Supreme Court has even sanctioned the use of marijuana at home on privacy grounds.

THIS IS quite a change. The infamous "states rights" campaigns in the Old South were, in essence, attempts by the states to continue withholding from their (usually black) citizens rights guaranteed to them under the U.S. Constitution. Virtually all of the great Warren court decisions—on such subjects as segregation, voting rights, and criminal procedure—came as reversals of state supreme-court rulings that had construed individual rights too narrowly.

Potentially the most controversial exercise of state power concerns abortion. In fact, state constitutions may well prevent a Reagan Supreme Court from outlawing abortion. Say the worst nightmares of pro-choice advocates

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come true and Reagan appoints a solid majority of pro-life justices. The court would probably reverse the 1973 landmark *Roe* v. *Wade* by simply returning to the states the discretion to forbid abortion. But many state courts have already said that the right to choose abortion is protected by state constitutions. Burt Neuborne, legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union, says, "Unquestionably there will be at least a dozen states that hold to *Roe* as a matter of state law." Indeed, courts in California, Connecticut, and Massachusetts have gone beyond *Roe* v. *Wade* and said not only that abortion is legal but that abortion-funding restrictions on state medical-aid programs violate the state constitutions. The U.S. Supreme Court expressly approved such restrictions in 1980.

Conservatives have fought back against activist state courts by challenging judges and rewriting constitutions. Rose Bird, Jerry Brown's controversial California chief justice, barely survived, with 51.7 percent of the vote in California's peculiar system of "retention elections," in which incumbent judges can be subject to recall. Less publicized, but more effective, was a 1979 amendment to the California constitution passed by voter initiative. Conservatives were dismayed at several California rulings that approved of busing plans on the grounds of the state "equal protection" clause. The amendment didn't repeal the guarantee of equal protection, but added: "provided, that nothing contained herein . . . imposes upon the State of California . . . any obligations or responsibilities which exceed those imposed by the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution with respect to the use of pupil school assignment or pupil transportation." In other words, the California court would now *have* to follow the United States Supreme Court decisions on busing. Conservatives in California also pushed through a series of get-tough-on-crime amendments in 1982. In Florida, voters amended the state constitution in 1982 to tie the state exclusionary rule to the U.S. Supreme Court's hard line on searches and seizures.

THE STATE COURT revival has an intellectual godfather: Justice Hans Linde of the Oregon Supreme Court. Born in Germany in 1924, Linde came to the United States in 1939 and a decade later was clerking for Justice William O. Douglas on the Supreme Court. He became a law professor at the University of Oregon in 1959 and was named to the state's highest court in 1977. Since then he has helped shape Oregon constitutional law into one of the most progressive in the nation—and almost found himself out of a job.

An ambitious young district attorney and a lower court judge ran tough campaigns against Linde in Oregon's usually noncontroversial judicial elections last year. Calling Linde "the Professor," his opponents presented themselves as law and order candidates and actually pushed the justice into a runoff. But Linde survived and continues to speak out for constitutional leadership from the states.

Linde's eloquent defenses of states' rights have found their way into opinions around the country. Linde's trust in the homegrown and his independence from Washington seem, of all things, tailor-made for Ronald Reagan's idea of federalism. But the president must not have anticipated that the new "states rights" would help resuscitate the individual liberties left threatened by Warren Burger's Supreme Court.

JEFFREY TOOBIN

Jeffrey Toobin is an editor of the *Harvard Law Review*.

The K.C. solution to a N.Y. problem.

MIDWESTWAY

PLINY the Elder, feeling that a bit of distance could help one's perspective, used to retreat to his villa on Lake Como to write helpful essays on how better to run Rome. In the same vein, as a man of the provinces, I might offer a modest proposal on how to resolve the Westway muddle currently confusing many of the best minds of New York City and the Department of Transportation. As all interstate highway and scenic waterway buffs now know, New York City and our government are planning to spend $4,200,000,000 to build four miles of highway and reclaim 169 acres from the murky Hudson on Manhattan's West Side. Although we in the Midwest aren't used to such large numbers, I just don't feel the citizens of New York and New Jersey are getting a good deal.

To begin with, reclaiming 169 acres from a perfectly good river seems extreme when for years the Corps of Engineers has been creating recreational lakes in Missouri and Kansas by flooding thousands of acres of perfectly good farmland. At the same time, farm prices in the Midwest have plummeted so that one can now purchase excellent land for under $1,000 an acre that would be within an easy hour's drive to downtown Kansas City. Beautiful untrammeled six-lane federal interstate highways radiate out through this unappreciated farmland, a veritable Elysian Field for the harried motorist used to New York's severed arterial road system. Why should anyone spend $4,200,000,000 to build what currently exists?

I would therefore like to propose an alternative that would give New York and New Jersey residents far more choice, help two parts of the country, and be consistent with the Reagan administration's supply-side economics. My simple five-part plan would also reinforce our American tradition of a melting-pot society tied to the frontier, while accomplishing all that Westway has set out to do to alleviate pressure on New York City's highway system.

The plan would use the $4,200,000,000 in the following way:

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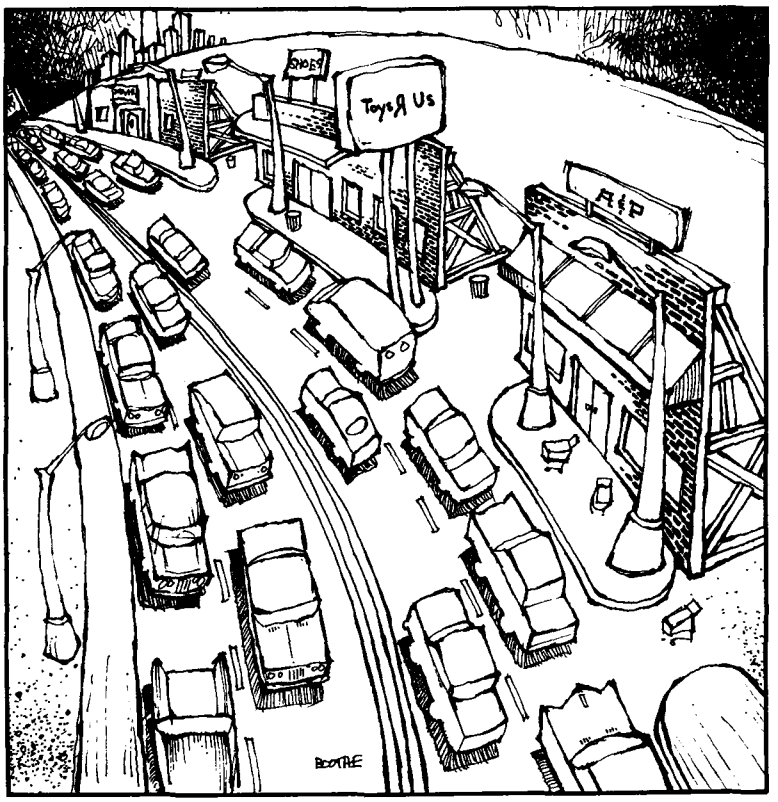
(1.) Take the first billion dollars and buy 200,000 five-acre homesteads within an hour's commute of downtown Kansas City. Many of these could be bought from foreclosed farms now owned by the FmHA, thus helping the budget deficit. These parcels would be distributed free to any present commuters in New Jersey or Westchester County who can show they have been commuting by car into Manhattan. The commuters and their families would have to homestead the land—that is, live there—for at least five years before selling. Tolls across the Missouri River are only 25 cents.

(2.) Take the next billion dollars and offer 50,000 current residents of the Upper West Side free $20,000 downpayments on $75,000 townhouses, all of which could be built within a half hour's drive from downtown Kansas City, complete with two-car garages, garbage disposals, and outdoor barbecues. The difference between rent currently paid in New York and the modest mortgage payments could be used to buy cars or sailboats for use on our new lakes mentioned above.



DRAWING BY ROBERT BOOTHE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC.

(3.) Take another billion dollars to any large New York City bank and borrow an additional three billion dollars to start a revolving leveraged buy-out fund. The fund could purchase a half-dozen or so large companies now based in New York City, and relocate them to downtown Kansas City. These companies could be carefully chosen so that they would create 150,000 new jobs to be offered to our new citizens. As new office space in downtown Kansas City rents for only about $16 a square foot, compared to as much as $65 per square foot in Midtown Manhattan, there would be an annual $100,000,000 in rent savings , which could be used to run a van fleet for any new residents who didn't want to buy a car. The stock and dividends from these companies would be held in another revolving fund so that as cash reserves were built up, additional companies could be purchased and relocated to Missouri.

(4.) The fourth billion dollars would be split into two funds. Since there would be 250,000 fewer commuters now using Manhattan's West Side streets, there would be no need for an elaborate new road. Nevertheless, we would use $500 million to recurb, pave, and improve 500 miles of streets in western Manhattan and New Jersey. We in Kansas City have been known to redo our streets for only $100,000 a mile. The other $500 million would be put into a "Ride The A Train" trust fund so that the $60,000,000 in annual income would give 100,000 former auto commuters free passes to and from work. Those remaining aboveground could probably even ride bicycles to work. The driving commuter would be thus virtually eliminated.

(5.) The final $200 million could be used to ease the cultural transition of the 250,000 families relocating to a new land. I suggest that a commission be set up to carefully choose institutions to be purchased and moved so that the people feel more comfortable in their first few years in Kansas City. Options include the Knicks ($15,000,000), the Giants ($50,000,000), Zabar's ($10,000,000), and selected ethnic restaurants. A stage front to duplicate a couple of one-mile shopping strips of New Jersey Route 17 could be built along the major Kansas City commuter routes to help the people from New Jersey in the first painful days. (Two sets at $10,000,000 come to $20,000,000.) The remaining $100,000,000 could be donated to some worthy New York cause.

This five-point plan would markedly improve the lives of at least 750,000 former New York and New Jersey workers and their families, while reducing competition for resources among those who remain. The striped bass now living on those watery 169 acres in the Hudson would be undisturbed, and the midwestern farmer could sell his excess land and have more demand for his fresh produce grown on the remaining acres. I realize that the plan's very simplicity might work against it, especially with the vast amount of time and effort already invested in Westway. Still, as Pliny the Elder was so fond of pointing out to his nephew, Pliny the Younger, if all roads led to Rome, the Plinys never could have gotten up to Como for the weekend.

DAVID KEMPER

David Kemper is president of Commerce Bancshares of Kansas City.

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The Soviets declare Afghanistan a free-fire zone.

MIGRATORY GENOCIDE

BY EDWARD GIRARDET

THE SOVIET ANTONOV reconnaissance plane droned into view shortly after dawn. It swept past Mir Samir, a towering, snowcapped peak on the southern fringe of the Hindu Kush mountains, and traversed the 14,000 foot-high Chamar Pass. The Antonov was no doubt tracking a stream of refugees, many of them farmers and nomads who were fleeing to Pakistan, still several weeks' trek away, with their camels, horses, sheep, and goats. They were attempting to escape the increasing pressures of war: repeated Red Army ground and air assaults, conscription drives by the Afghan security forces, and famine caused by the destruction of food sources.

It was mid-August last year, and I was accompanying a two-man British CBS-TV team on my sixth trip through Afghanistan since the Soviet invasion on December 27, 1979. We were on our way to the fertile Panjshair Valley, a prominent resistance stronghold, where the Afghan guerrillas, the mujahideen, were trying to stave off the Soviet Union's seventh offensive against the region, a massive operation involving a combined Soviet-Afghan force of more than 20,000 men. A week later I passed through the Chamar area again, on my way back to Pakistan. Dozens of mutilated animal carcasses, twisted metal pots, scorched clothing, torn saddles, and a boy's tattered slingshot littered the ground. The dead had been buried in a yawning bomb crater, their bodies covered with a tarpaulin, upon which stones were piled, in the Muslim manner. The attack was recorded with a single prayer flag—a piece of green, pink, and orange cloth hanging from a wooden tent pole. The survivors straggled into Pakistan in late September.

The Chamar Pass massacre shows just what kind of war the Kremlin is waging in Afghanistan. By slaughtering innocent human beings, bombing farms, despoiling crops, killing animals, and wrecking fragile irrigation systems, the USSR seeks not only to punish the local population for its resistance sympathies, but also to totally disrupt the economic and social infrastructure of the guerrilla-held areas, which represent well over 80 percent of the country. The Kremlin has made it clear that it is fully prepared to pursue this goal for years, if not decades.

Although the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan is one of the most extensive strategic wars today, American press coverage—particularly television—has been poor. The European media have been considerably more resourceful. The physical remoteness, rugged terrain, and cultural complexity of Afghanistan account for some of the neglect. Situations change rapidly in a matter of days or hours from valley to valley, and it can take weeks to send out hand-carried dispatches or film reports from the interior. Still, the neglect is probably due as much to a lack of editorial resolve as it is to the dangers and difficulties of covering the war. At present, no American newspaper, magazine, or wire service has a full-time correspondent reporting on Afghanistan. Yet the war continues to escalate. The Soviets have become mired in a counterinsurgency campaign that has already lasted longer than World War II; and their continuing presence in Afghanistan poses a grave threat to the regional stability of South Asia and the Gulf, and ultimately to Western interests.

At present, the Soviet Union maintains an expeditionary force of more than 115,000 troops (increased from 85,000 in the early days of the occupation), which controls the cities, air bases, main highways, and certain strategic points. The Soviets have experienced continuing setbacks with their armed forces. The desertion-ridden Afghan army, once over 100,000 strong, can barely muster 35,000 men at any one time, and the Soviets have been forced to rely on highly paid militiamen to bolster local security. The Red Army, too, has been replacing its largely conscript army—which, Soviet deserters claim, is suffering from low morale and a high rate of drug abuse—by more motivated professionals. Still, the Soviets have a number of obvious advantages over the poorly equipped, disorganized guerrillas. They can draw from a lethal arsenal of weapons ranging from the rapid-fire Mi-24 helicopter gunship to the highly maneuverable SU-25 fighter-bomber—not to mention a Machiavellian array of subversive tactics by the KGB.

What's more, the Red Army's ability to conduct a large-scale counterinsurgency war has steadily improved. Deploying well-trained commandos and tactics suited to mountain guerrilla warfare in the northeastern areas of Afghanistan, or armor and air-supported *talashi* (cordon-and-thump attacks) in the more exposed desert zones, the Soviets have sought to destroy the most defiant of the resistance's vast patchwork of 300-odd guerrilla

Edward Girardet is a special correspondent for *The Christian Science Monitor*.

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fronts. Nevertheless, the war has remained a grueling military standoff. The Soviets may be fighting better in certain areas, but so are the guerrillas.

It is on the civilian front that the Afghans are in danger of losing the war. The Soviet leadership has realized that it is in every sense a "people's war," and has adopted an unrestrained policy of what has become known as "migratory genocide"—the killing or forcing out of people suspected of supporting the mujahideen. "It does not take much to realize what the Russians are trying to do," said a member of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan in Peshawar, Pakistan. "They are turning every region that does not bend to their will into a wasteland."

Some five million people, one-quarter to one-third of the pre-war population, have fled to Pakistan, Iran, and elsewhere. Countless others have sought refuge in the mountains or in Kabul and a few other overcrowded Soviet-controlled cities. Although reliable figures are virtually impossible to come by, hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children are believed to have been killed or to have died as a direct consequence of the war.

The Soviet Union's commitment to Afghanistan continues to rise—not only in the number of lives lost, anywhere from 10,000 to 20,000 Soviet troops since the invasion, but also in the economic resources used to prop up the Babrak Karmal regime in Kabul. For the sake of appearances, the Kremlin still seeks to uphold the myth that its "limited military contingent" is there to assist "independent" Afghanistan against what it describes as "subversive bandit forces" of outside "reactionary" or "imperialist" powers. But it has become increasingly apparent that Moscow's occupation is intended to bring about the eventual annexation of Afghanistan—either partial, leaving a rump state to satisfy Third World concerns about self-determination, or total annexation, another Soviet Socialist Republic.

THE SOVIETS' domination of the Kabul government is almost complete. Soviet advisers now effectively control the decision-making in the ministries and the army, and they are in the process of "Sovietizing" virtually every aspect of society in the communist-occupied areas. (See "The War In The City," by Jeri Laber and Barnett Rubin, page 16.) By offering financial incentives and privileges to tribal, religious, and guerrilla leaders, the Soviets hope to obtain active assistance—or at least neutrality—in defending the revolution. Indeed, they have established an elaborate network of informers that severely hampers the resistance. Earlier this year, one of Afghanistan's leading northern comanders, Zabiullah, was reportedly killed after being betrayed by several of his comrades-in-arms, possibly at the instigation of the KHAD, the Afghan version of the KGB.

The Soviet strategy to broaden the Afghan Communist Party's base has been hindered somewhat by internecine strife between its two factions, the ruling pro-Soviet Parcham (Banner) and the more nationalist Khalq (Masses). By taking a long-term approach toward consolidating power, however, the Kremlin has recognized the need to cultivate whatever pools of support are available while laying the foundations for a "new" Afghanistan. As many as 50,000 teenagers have been sent to the USSR for training and indoctrination. Even if it takes a generation or two, the ultimate hope is to replace the present administration with appropriately groomed pro-Moscow cadres.

The first waves of "new" Afghans have already returned. It is not yet certain that Soviet methods of indoctrination will work. In the past, Afghans who studied in the USSR have returned home as ardent anti-Soviet nationalists because of the racial discrimination they experienced. And former Communists who have defected since the invasion have referred to the disparaging manner with which Soviet advisers treat their Afghan comrades.

THE STARK realities of Moscow's determination to entrench has accentuated the loss of Afghanistan as a traditional buffer state between Russia and the Indian subcontinent. It has also resulted in Afghanistan's becoming an increasingly important part of U.S. foreign policy. If the latest reported figures are correct, the escalation of Central Intelligence Agency backing of the mujahideen ($325 million during the first five years, with $250 million earmarked for fiscal year 1985) now represents the largest U.S. covert operation since the Vietnam War. Congress, if no one else, is sure to demand more careful scrutiny of the issue.

The disputes currently center on the use of military aid to accomplish foreign policy objectives. Some would like to see the CIA program used as a means of hitting the Russians with their own Vietnam. Representative Charles Wilson, who has pushed this approach, has been instrumental in lobbying for more effective weapons for the mujahideen such as advanced anti-aircraft guns. Some critics of the program have referred to the dangers of overtechnologizing "primitive people." Still others maintain that it is pointless to support a resistance that has no hope of winning against the Russians.

None of these arguments, though, take into account the objectives of the Afghans themselves. Mujahideen make it clear that they have no desire to be manipulated as an instrument of American retribution. And funneling weapons is not going to purchase pro-Americanism. Traditionally, Afghans have sought to maintain their independence by forging temporary alliances only if they are to their advantage. The present struggle is not aimed at "defeating" the Russians, but at making life so uncomfortable that they will leave, or at least negotiate. Many Afghans realize, too, that even if the Soviets withdraw, their country will have to live in the shadow of Russia. Neutrality toward the superpowers could prove to be their best course once again.

Furthermore, though living in a lesser developed country, Afghans reflect an amalgam of ancient civilizations and historical influences. The ethnic diversity of Afghani-

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stan is comparable to that of Yugoslavia. The varied, often contentious Muslim population ranges from Sunni Pushtuns mainly to the east, to Tadjiks, Uzbeks, and Turkmen in the north, and Shiite Hazaras in the central highlands. "The West should try to understand that all we are trying to do is fight for our freedom," said Mohammed Es-Haq, foreign affairs representative for mujahideen leader Massoud. "We badly need help, but we also ask that one respect our rights as a people."

Though some Afghan groups could be aptly described as Islamic purists or radicals, it should not be assumed, as have some observers, that the Afghans' resistance is a collection of feuding tribesmen intent on preserving their old ways and on bringing about another Khomeini-style revolution. A largely peasant people, Afghans certainly remain highly conservative and devout in their jihad against the infidels from the north. But the consequences of war have ensured that things will never be the same again.

A recently formed centrist alliance of four resistance "fundamentalist" and "moderate" parties now probably commands the bulk of Afghan popular support, leaving the two most extreme Islamic groups dangling. The graybeards, the traditional village leaders, have seen the fight against a modern, highly technological enemy evolve as a young man's war, resulting in an unprecedented handover of power. Thus, in a sense, Afghans in the guerrilla-controlled areas are witnessing a social revolution from below rather than one imposed from above, as the Communists are attempting in the cities. "Whereas the resistance used to represent backwardness and the Soviets' progress," says Olivier Roy, a French Foreign Ministry consultant on Afghan affairs, "now it is the guerrillas who stand for change and the Soviets for economic colonialism." As for the three million or so Afghans who have fled to Pakistan, they have been exposed for the first time to numerous outside influences: government administration, medical care, and, increasingly, education. And women have begun to assume new responsibilities in the absence of husbands and sons who are fighting, working, or dead.

AS A RESISTANCE, the Afghans lack the political discipline or defined social concepts of other liberation movements. The mujahideen have far to go before they can hope to emulate the efficiency of the Viet Cong, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, or UNITA in Angola. Militarily, they appear to have sufficient good-quality small arms as well as a respectable array of heavy machine guns, light anti-aircraft weapons, and short-range mortars. But over the past few years, as the Soviets have upgraded their counterinsurgent tactics and materiel, the guerrillas have seen their defense capabilities whittled away. Hence the argument for better and more sophisticated arms.

In the past, most of the mujahideens' military aid has come from the Middle East, China, and the international arms market, a large portion of which is believed to have been purchased through American funding. Other arms, such as the Soviet-design AK-47 or the more modern AK-74 assault rifles, have been obtained through capture or defection. But much of the weaponry intended for the interior never finds its way into guerrilla hands, largely because of poor distribution or outright corruption among Pakistani intermediaries and certain Afghans-in-exile. What materiel does arrive is reported to be of poor quality. And Pakistan, which acts as a principal arms conduit (but denies it publicly), has tended to limit the flow of heavy, sophisticated weapons in order not to provoke the Soviets. As a "front-line" state, the military regime of President Zia ul-Haq seeks, but has yet to receive, American guarantees of protection in the event of Soviet attack.

Still, it is crucial to note that the mujahideen suffer from a lamentable lack of training, organization, and qualified personnel. Simply providing money and weapons is not going to solve these problems. Military assistance should emphasize quality rather than quantity, with weapons best suited to the terrain and Afghan capabilities. Aid as well as training should be channeled not only through the political groups in Peshawar, but also directly to proven guerrilla commanders inside.

Most of the present controversy in Washington concerning CIA covert assistance overlooks the Afghans' humanitarian needs. Although international relief for Afghan refugees in Pakistan has been more than generous, little has gone to the six million to eight million inhabitants still struggling to survive inside the resistance-held areas of Afghanistan. The effect of denying relief to the Afghan interior is to erode local resistance by encouraging people to flee. For the moment, the mujahideen lack both the ability and the resources to assist civilians whose farms, crops, and livestock have been destroyed. Unlike the Soviets, who are also attempting to turn around the population with economic incentives and social reform, they have nothing to offer but war. The more perceptive commanders acknowledge that the present struggle may last "40 years," and that a sense of battle fatigue has already set in among many Afghans.

Some Afghan aid groups are now trying to help the guerrillas establish primary schools, agricultural centers, literacy classes, and health clinics inside Afghanistan. They have also suggested the creation of a Free Afghan University-in-exile for the several thousand former lecturers and students now milling about in Pakistan. Not only could this serve as a valuable resistance forum, but it could bolster guerrilla ranks with the qualified people it so desperately needs—notably doctors, teachers, and technicians.

THERE IS ANOTHER way that the West can show its support for the Afghan resistance: by increasing the depth and extent of its press coverage of the war. As the effects of "migratory genocide" become more evident, the Kremlin would like nothing better than to contain all "un-

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official" access to the country. The Soviets have exerted considerable pressure on the Pakistani government for allowing foreigners, whether journalists or relief workers, to cross the border. Last year the Soviets launched repeated air raids against the villages and refugee camps in Pakistan, killing more than 100 people. From the Soviet point of view, continued cross-border movements of outside observers are at least as threatening as the traffic of weapons. The Soviet ambassador in Islamabad remarked in September 1984 that any reporters caught with the guerrillas would be "eliminated." When asked whether this constituted Kremlin policy, a Soviet Embassy official in Washington responded that anyone "violating the territorial integrity of Afghanistan would have to face the consequences."

Denying or simply ignoring allegations of atrocities, the Kremlin continues to ignore demands by internationally recognized fact-finding commissions to enter Afghanistan. Only twice has the International Committee of the Red Cross been able to visit the Afghan capital, the last time in the fall of 1982, and then only under severe restrictions. "Ideally," said one European diplomat, "they would like to get on with their war without the outside world knowing." The difficulties in covering this kind of war are formidable, but the consequences of failing to do so are devastating.

The gulag reaches Kabul.

THE WAR IN THE CITY

BY JERI LABER AND BARNETT RUBIN

THE WORLD is slowly learning the brutal facts about the Soviet Union's war in Afghanistan. Accounts by some of the millions of Afghan villagers who have fled to Pakistan and articles by a handful of Western journalists who have illegally ventured into the country detail the bombings, the massacres, and the executions by Soviet and Afghan government troops, which have been unable to gain permanent control over rural Afghanistan. Less attention has been paid to the policies of the capital city of Kabul, where the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and its Soviet sponsors are in control. It is there that they are creating a new Afghan society.

Information from Kabul is scarce; the few journalists who have been allowed into the city have been prevented from conducting any independent investigations. But interviews with refugees from the city—professionals, academics, former government employees, a former secret police official—reveal a good deal about Soviet intentions in Afghanistan.

Totalitarian controls have already transformed all independent institutions and destroyed all forms of civil liberty. All sources of information are directly controlled by the government. All books, newspapers, and radio and television broadcasts must conform to the official line. Criticism of the government is not allowed. Private conversations are monitored by an extensive network of spies. Meetings and gatherings must have official approval.

In their efforts to recast Afghan society, the Afghan Communists and their Soviet advisers have given top priority to the educational system. All efforts now focus on producing new leaders for a new Afghanistan. Before the Communist coup in 1978, Kabul University was one of the most independent and modern institutions in Afghanistan. Professors who had been trained all over the world taught a variety of subjects from a number of different scientific and ideological viewpoints. Classes were sexually integrated. Students belonging to various Islamic and leftist groups competed for seats in a freely elected student council.

IMMEDIATELY after the coup, Soviet advisers arrived at the university and began changing the curriculum. One professor told us that his course on the history of Islamic art had been abolished and that he and other professors had unsuccesfully fought to preserve the course on the history of Islamic civilization, which had been the centerpiece of the social studies curriculum; the course was relegated to minor status. "New subjects were introduced," he told us. "For instance: dialectical materialism, history of the workers' movement, history of Russia, the Spanish language [taught by Cubans], and the Russian language."

New deans, usually young party members without academic qualifications, were appointed to direct the university's 12 departments. They received reports from informers on campus, which they used to threaten professors into teaching "scientifically, according to Marxist theory." "In each faculty, in each class, we had some stooge, some Communist spy," a former rector of Kabul University explained. "When he heard that a professor was teaching something that did not conform to the official ideology, he would sabotage the professor, protest to the secret police that this professor is antiprogressive, antinational, he is in the pay of the CIA. I tried my best to conform, but I felt that they didn't believe me." The rector eventually fled to Pakistan.

In 1982 a group of professors formed an "Organization for the Defense of Academic Freedom and Human Rights." The Afghan secret police (KHAD) soon broke up the organization and arrested a number of leading figures, including Hasan Kakar, an internationally respected historian. Professor Kakar and three others from the group are now serving prison sentences for "distributing antistate literature." A former student who was recently released

Jeri Laber is the executive director of Helsinki Watch. Barnett Rubin is an assistant professor of political science at Yale University.

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from the same prison described seeing the imprisoned professors: "I saw Shukrullah Kohgaday [a history professor serving a seven-year sentence]. I saw Osman Rostar [law and political science, 12 years]. I saw Kakar [eight years]. I saw [Habib-ur-Rahman] Halah [journalism, ten years]. Osman Rostar's hair is all white, and he has lost his mind. Halah is entirely deaf from the beating. Kakar's hair is entirely white, but he is still surviving."

Since the Communist coup d'état in April 1978, between 50 and 70 percent of the Kabul University faculty has been killed, imprisoned, or driven into exile. The faculty members who have replaced them often come from outside the country: according to the May 22, 1983, edition of the official Kabul newspaper, *New Times*, 60 percent of the Kabul University faculty is now from "Socialist countries." Materials from the Soviet bloc countries are now pervasive at the university. Every faculty has a "friendship room," decorated with pictures of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, where periodicals and other literature from the USSR, Eastern Europe, and Cuba are distributed.

THE SOVIETS have also transformed Kabul's high schools into centers for political indoctrination. Recruitment for the government's security apparatus is done in the schools through the Democratic Organization of Afghan Youth. Many students told us of the variety of ways in which they were cajoled or intimidated into joining the organization, as it is known. They described being interrogated by members of the organization about private conversations that were apparently monitored by KHAD agents.

They described how religious instruction had been replaced by "politics" classes. "In the politics class we were talking about Sabra and Shatila in Palestine," Mohammed Gul, a former student in the Technical High School of Kabul, recalled. "One of the students said that he would rather learn about our own country, where there were hundreds of Sabras and Shatilas that no one was talking about. After the class he was arrested by two members of the organization. He was imprisoned for four months, and after four months he signed a paper saying he would no longer speak in class."

Many thousands of Afghan students are being sent to the USSR for training. According to an August 1983 announcement by the Afghan minister of higher education, 12,000 Afghan University students were then studying in the USSR, more than twice the number of students now at Kabul University. Thousands of high school and even primary school children have also been sent to the USSR. Some are forced to go against their will. Last November the Associated Press cited Western diplomatic reports that Soviet authorities in Afghanistan were sending thousands of primary school Afghan children to the Soviet Union for "at least ten years of indoctrination into Communism and the Soviet way of life." The diplomats reported that on November 5, 1984, 870 children between the ages of seven and nine departed for the Soviet Union, leaving behind weeping parents at Kabul Airport.

WHILE CADRES of Afghan youth are being trained to take over leadership in Afghanistan, control in Kabul is currently being maintained through terror and the omnipresent KHAD. Yves Heller, an Agence France Presse correspondent who visited Kabul in May 1983, reported that "the city is in the grip of fear, which was visible in all the Afghans we managed to meet. This fear, they said, is methodically maintained by the secret police of the Afghan regime, the KHAD, 'a veritable octopus which is continually spreading its tentacles' over the capital. . . . Stories of disappearances, arrests, spying are plentiful in Kabul, . . . where the KHAD has become not just a state within a state, but the state itself."

The KHAD has a larger budget than even the military and is directly financed by the Soviet Union. Organized in 1980 under the guidance of KGB advisers, it remains under close Soviet supervision. KHAD informers sit in virtually every office and classroom in Kabul. A former high official of the KHAD told us in an interview in Pakistan on October 2, 1984, that the KHAD aimed to have "a spy in every family."

The KHAD enforces the new order through mass arrests and torture. Arrests are made without warrant or warning: at night in homes, by day at offices or classrooms or on the street. Arrests are based on informers' reports, accusations extracted under torture, and a variety of suspicions based on associations or family ties. Once arrested, a prisoner may disappear for months, and sometimes forever. Arrest is invariably followed by systematic interrogation by KHAD agents and Soviet "advisers," who administer tortures that appear to be carefully calibrated in length and severity according to the importance and stamina of the prisoner. Though torture is not new in Afghanistan, it is different under the Soviets. In the words of Amnesty International, "It was only after the formation of the KHAD in late 1979 that the practice [of torture] was reported to have become systematic."

The KHAD has established numerous small detention centers throughout the city where prisoners are taken for a preliminary investigation. From there they are taken to the Central Interrogation Office, located in the Sedarat Palace. Razia, a student arrested in the Kabul University library, described the variety of torture she saw in Sedarat: "Electricity, standing in cold water, keeping you from sleeping, beating, these are very normal things. They made a man stand on a board with nails coming out and beat him with chains or cables. For women, they would keep them from sleeping, or they would make them stand in cold water, then add a chemical, and after half an hour the skin would start to come off their feet. They made them stand barefoot in snow, gave them electric shocks, pulled out their hair, beat them with electric shock batons. They took one girl to a room, and they brought a man, a mujahed. Then the KHAD men molested this girl, and then they beat the man to death in front of her and left her with the body. She became deranged."

Qadratullah, a farmer whose village north of Kabul has harbored resistance fighters, was arrested and tortured by

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Soviet officers as well as by Afghans: "They took me to Sedarat. Then two Russians and an interpreter came. They were beating me and hitting me against the wall. For five nights they repeated the same questions. I said I didn't know anything. Then the Parchami [Afghan Party member] hit me in the stomach, and I had to lean against the wall. The Russian said to bring the wire, and the Russians connected the wires to my toes. They gave me a shock, and I fell unconscious."

Interrogation and torture are followed by incarceration in prison, where conditions are themselves a form of torture. A former student described a small cell with 48 people in it, no windows, crawling with lice, and only one pot for a toilet. In Pol-e Charkhi Prison, an immense complex holding perhaps 15,000 prisoners, the inmates declared a hunger strike in May 1982. They were protesting overcrowding in cells where prisoners could not all lie down at the same time; restrictions limiting prisoners to one five-minute visit to the toilet each day; searches; and spying by agents. In response to the hunger strike, the prison administration beat the prisoners and lengthened the sentences of some.

Those prisoners who survive may ultimately be brought before the Revolutionary Court. This court, which meets secretly in the Sedarat, invariably confirms the verdict ordered by the KHAD. Prisoners are not permitted to prepare or present a defense. Sentences frequently include the death penalty, which is usually carried out in secret. There is no appeal from the decisions of the Revolutionary Court, which, according to Syed Gharib Gharibnawaz, former chief justice of the Kabul Civil Court, is controlled by a committee of 30 Soviet advisers.

Though the people of Kabul live in fear, an underground persists. Recent reports tell of the arrest of 15 women students at Kabul University for planning to distribute "night letters" (underground pamphlets) on the fifth anniversary of the Soviet invasion. The quiet nights in the capital, where the curfew is deepened by a blackout caused by resistance attacks on the power lines, are shattered from time to time by the sounds of rocket and mortar fire directed at the Soviet Embassy or the offices of the KHAD. Professor Abdul Ahad of the agricultural faculty of Kabul University, who was arrested and tortured for refusing to join the party, tells how the sounds of resistance attacks penetrated even the walls of Pol-e Charkhi Prison, giving him and his cell mates the courage to go on.

The Soviets claim that they are bringing progress in the form of tractors and combines to the Afghan people, but this is not the modern technology that most Afghans have come to know. It is, rather, the bombers and helicopter gunships that have devastated their countryside. It is, rather, the electric shock batons that are driving them into a nightmare version of the 20th century.

From McGovern to Weinberger, an old tradition finds new voices.

ISOLATIONISM, LEFT AND RIGHT

BY CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

IT IS A wonder that for a continental nation protected by two oceans and bordered by two weak and friendly neighbors isolationism should be an epithet. Yet Pearl Harbor made it so, and ever since it has been mandatory for any serious political actor to deny being isolationist. Consequently, even those advocating the most radical retrenchment of American commitments overseas protest that they do not call for isolating the United States from the world, economically or even diplomatically. This attempt to retire the word is not very convincing. Isolationism has never meant total withdrawal from the world. It has always meant *selective* disengagement from *certain* relationships (alliance, military) in *certain* parts of the world. Classical 19th-century isolationism avoided European entanglements only. As the historian Seilig Adler wrote, "Our isolationist barricade had only one wall. We shut only our eastern door." Nor did classical isolationism mean passivity and neutrality. During its pre-World War I isolationist heyday, American foreign policy was selectively active and expansionist, extending American hegemony southward under the Monroe Doctrine and westward all the way to the Philippines and to China through the Open Door.

After World War II the United States became the dominant power in the world and internationalism became the guiding ideology of its foreign policy. Internationalism reached its rhetorical high-water mark with John Kennedy's "bear any burden" inaugural pledge. That was soon put into practice in Vietnam. Since then there has been a gradual but marked retreat. From the cutoff of aid to Saigon and the Clark amendment (banning U.S. intervention in Angola) to the retreat from Beirut and the Boland

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amendment (restricting aid to the Nicaraguan *contras*) the United States has selectively, though hardly systematically, sought to reduce its international commitments.

It is debatable whether the decline in America's relative dominance was inevitable. It is not debatable that there have been strong and articulate American voices arguing that such a contraction of America's reach and responsibilities is desirable. Although as explicit an isolationist vision as George McGovern's "Come Home America" is still a rarity, a new isolationism has clearly emerged, picking up the strands of a tradition 200 years old.

We tend to think of that tradition as a property of the right, since at its apogee on the eve of Pearl Harbor, isolationism had become almost totally identified with anti-New Deal, far right America Firsters. We tend to forget the pre-war tradition of left isolationism. It included socialists (such as Norman Thomas), progressives (such as William Borah and Robert LaFollette), and periodically, i.e., when Moscow so instructed, Communists. (Thomas, for example, argued that the cost of foreign commitments would prevent economic reconstruction at home, a familiar argument today on Capitol Hill.) With World War II, both left and right isolationism went into eclipse, not to reemerge until Vietnam.

Today isolationism has regained its voice. It is no longer a philosophy of political eccentrics, as it was from World War II until the mid-sixties. Nor is it, as conservatives now like to charge, the exclusive property of the left. It has reconstituted itself in both parties, finding, as in the pre-war era, two distinct forms of expression.

THE FIRST of these, left isolationism, has become the ideology of the Democratic Party, not of its ("McGovernite") fringes but of its mainstream. Modern left isolationism is defined by a paradox: its ends remain truly internationalist, but its approved means have turned radically anti-interventionist. There is no retreat from the grand Wilsonian commitment to the spread of American values. These tend now to be called human rights rather than democracy, but the commitment to their success has lost none of its Wilsonian universalism or moral urgency. "The cause of freedom is indivisible," declared Walter Mondale in a major foreign policy address in November 1983. He followed with a *tour d'horizon* of the world's top human rights violators from South Korea to Poland to South Africa. Mondale's detailed interest in what human rights violators rightly call their "internal affairs" is not an isolated burst of Wilsonianism. Universal human rights has become *the* foreign policy cause of the post-Carter Democratic Party, and for that matter, of post-Vietnam liberalism. This cause is as grandly internationalist in its reach as any since Wilson, FDR, and Truman. Only in its means is it novel.

"American restraint on intervention, military action, and covert operations does not mean American indifference," said Gary Hart. "We care about human rights and democratic values and economic development; and we can show our concern in our diplomacy, our aid programs. . . ." Diplomacy. Aid. Something is missing. "You don't bring in democracy at the point of a bayonet," said Daniel Moynihan about Grenada. That idea will come as a surprise to Germans and Japanese (and now Grenadans, too), the beneficiaries of an earlier Democratic internationalism that defined itself (vs. pre-war isolationism) precisely by its insistence on the relationship between democracy and bayonets.

LEFT ISOLATIONISM is the isolationism of means. And the modern Democratic Party is its home. In the 1984 Democratic campaign the principal disagreement over Central America was whether the United States should station 20 advisers in Honduras (Walter Mondale's position) or zero (Gary Hart's). On Angola, El Salvador, Grenada, Lebanon, and Nicaragua, the Democratic position has involved some variety of disengagement: talks, aid, sanctions, diplomacy—first. In practice this invariably means—only. Force is ruled out, effectively if not explicitly.

Why? Like their pre-war socialist and progressive forebears, today's left isolationists consider the international status quo unjust and do not want American power used to preserve it. Walter Lippmann and THE NEW REPUBLIC, for example, came out against the League of Nations because it meant the United States would have to defend Versailles and the territorial ambitions of the victorious European powers that Versailles sanctioned. Today liberals find the United States the status quo power. And for those on the wrong side of history, as the left likes to say, force is not only wrong, it is futile. "The gravest political and security dangers in the developing world," explains the 1984 Democratic platform, "flow from . . . poverty, repression, and despair. Against adversaries such as these, military force is of limited value." What is of value, then? "Such weapons as economic assistance, economic and political reform, and support for democratic values by, among other steps, funding scholarships to study at U.S. colleges and universities." These must be "the primary instruments of American influence in the developing countries."

What does it mean in practice to rely on cultural, economic, and diplomatic tools? No one seriously believes that cultural exchange will secure American interests anywhere. Its effects are at best diffuse and very long-term. What to use in the meantime? Say, in this century?

Economic aid is always cheap to advocate in the abstract. Giving it is another matter. Congressional Democrats, so emphatic that Central America's root problems are economic and social, gagged on the Kissinger Commission's recommendation of eight billion dollars in aid.

But the problem with economic weapons is not just the sincerity of its advocates. The fact is that poverty in most of the world is endemic and totally unresponsive to any imaginable American economic intervention. To identify poverty as the principal cause of instability—and thus the principal threat to American interests—is to admit that instability is intractable and our interest not defendable.

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It is not just giving economic aid that is so limited an instrument—so is invoking economic sanctions. Experience with South Africa, Russia, Poland, and Iran has shown that embargoes fail. Democracies hate to interrupt free trade or to expend taxpayers' money to promote non-economic ends. The boycotter invariably loses heart and caves in. Jimmy Carter's courageous grain embargo was attacked by everybody, from his presidential opponent to, four years later, his own former running mate. Last week, in criticizing the idea of sanctions against New Zealand for barring U.S. warships, *The New York Times* argued that it would "punish American consumers of lamb at least as much as New Zealand's producers." ANZUS bows before the lamb-eater lobby.

That leaves diplomatic tools. At its most unserious level, this means talk—anywhere, anytime, with anyone. There were even complaints that the Reagan administration had not tried to negotiate with Grenada's Bernard Coard, a little tyrant with whom even Maurice Bishop, considerably more attuned to Coard's thinking, had some difficulty communicating.

THERE IS, however, a serious core to the contemporary Democratic notion of diplomacy as the preeminent foreign policy tool. It is the idea of multilateralism: collective action by peace-loving countries against international malefactors. Multilateralism is the great Democratic defense against the charge of isolationism. "The Republicans have always been unilateralists—go-it-aloners," said Arthur Schlesinger in an interview with Morton Kondracke. "The Democrats are traditional internationalists who believe we can't run the world ourselves." Jimmy Carter's deputy chief of the National Security Council, David Aaron, argued that the isolationist charge "misses the entire thrust of Democratic policy from Truman to John Kennedy to Walter Mondale. What all of them have tried to do is create some sort of stable world order that respects international law and allows for economic development and the spread of prosperity. The Republicans . . . are still unilateralist."

True. For 50 years multilateralism has been central to the internationalist idea. It was to be the principal instrument of world order. In its service were fashioned a host of institutions. Some were global, like the League of Nations, the U.N., and the World Court. Some were regional, like NATO, ANZUS, and the OAS. (Remember SEATO? CENTO?) Collective security, which we had failed to implement in the interwar period, was to be the guarantor of peace and stability.

Aren't today's multilateralists the real heirs to FDR and Truman, as Schlesinger claims? Only in form. Multilateralism means something very different today than it did in the immediate postwar period. Then, when the United States was by far the overwhelming power in the world, multilateralism was indeed the preferred means for American action—*and was no real restraint on it.* In 1950 the United States could push through a "Uniting for Peace" resolution in the General Assembly, and in effect, act unilaterally in Korea under multilateral auspices. Kennedy and Johnson could justify intervention in Vietnam by appeal to SEATO obligations and by the presence of "allied" troops from South Korea and Australia. Johnson intervened in the Dominican Republic under cover of the OAS. "For the very strong," says Robert Tucker, "multilateralism . . . does not materially restrict behavior." It is, in fact, "an advantage in that it gives their actions a legitimacy that they might otherwise not possess."

FOR THE STRONG, multilateralism is a cover for unilateralism. For the rest, it is a cover for inaction. Today the United States is part of the rest. The global multilateral institutions, like the U.N., have been captured by a hostile Third World-Communist majority. The regional institutions are paralyzed by reluctant allies. (The OAS, for example, would never have approved Grenada. That is why we went not to it but to the Association of Eastern Caribbean States, an alliance of dubious existence, to provide the 82nd Airborne with a flag of convenience.) Multilateralism, now a true hindrance to American action, is a synonym—an excuse—for paralysis. It has become what Lippmann once called "the internationalism of the isolationist."

The irony is that classical isolationism opposed multilateral entanglement for fear it would draw America into foreign conflicts. Modern isolationism embraces multilateralism because it keeps America out of foreign conflicts. The reason for the change is a simple reversal in the power relations. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, the United States was a junior partner to the aggressive, imperial powers of Europe. Today the United States is the preeminent, dynamic power. Its allies want nothing more than to tend their vineyards undisturbed. Exquisite concern for their wishes is a guarantee of inaction.

It is also at the heart of Democratic foreign policy. The 1984 platform contains, by my count, no fewer than ten references to multilateralism. Significantly, six are in a single section—the section on the Western Hemisphere, the one area where one might expect the United States, because of tradition, interest, and a preponderance of power, to claim a unilateral right to action (what used to be called the Monroe Doctrine).

Listen to Gary Hart's critique of the Reagan administration in his major foreign policy speech of the campaign (Chicago, March 1984): "[It] made no effort to send peacekeeping forces from the *U.N.* or from neutral nations to Lebanon; to invoke *OAS* sanctions for Grenada; to back the *Contadora* governments' efforts for a peaceful resolution in El Salvador and Nicaragua. . . . The Reagan administration has turned its back on . . . *North-South dialogue* between rich and poor nations; turned its back on the *World Bank*'s efforts to offer some opportunity and hope to the world's neediest people; turned its back on *United Nations* efforts to curb racist rule in South Africa. . . ." (My italics.)

Or Walter Mondale. Immediately after the Grenada invasion, he criticized the president because he failed to

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"adequately consult with our allies." He noted that Margaret Thatcher opposed the invasion and her advice should have been "fully weighed" because Grenada is a Commonwealth nation. "I understand the French were not consulted at all and have opposed the invasion." The French? "At a time when we are relying on their cooperation and assistance in Lebanon, we should be making every effort to keep their confidence." Oh. Later he charged that "Mr. Reagan ignored the nonintervention provisions of our treaty obligations, as well as opportunities for multilateral action under the OAS charter."

One measure of how far this line of reasoning has penetrated Democratic thinking is a recent speech given by Senator Moynihan. Moynihan takes internationalism very seriously. So much so that he argued that "had the Democratic Party not failed in its foreign policy mission in 1919-20 [to support the League] the world likely could have escaped the Nazis" and World War II. We had a second chance with the U.N., he argued, and we made it work. "Something, however, had changed in the world from the time of Wilson." That was "the rise of totalitarianism." As a result, "the world order Wilson and Roosevelt had envisioned was not really a practical arrangement and perforce we fell back on military alliances, vast rearmament, and eventually a succession of limited wars."

So Moynihan acknowledges that while multilateralism may once have been, it no longer is adequate to meet the new threat to world order. What to do? Continue the forms of American unilateralism (including "limited wars") that we have had to fall back on in the recent past? His answer: "The age of the totalitarian state is waning. . . . The Soviet Union is a declining power." So? "Our grand strategy must be to wait out the Soviets." In other words: between now and then, when the totalitarian threat will wane and permit a Wilsonian internationalism to prevail, there is nothing to be done! While the rest of the party spells out a program of multilateral paralysis, its most serious foreign policy thinker presents waiting-it-out as a bold new foreign policy idea. Such is the state of left isolationism.

LEFT ISOLATIONISM has received much attention because it has captured the majority party, the party that invented internationalism. However, there is a second species of contemporary isolationist thought, less developed, less noticed, but crucial. These isolationists are weary of, indeed largely indifferent to, the world and any dream of reforming it. They call for retreat from Wilsonian goals. They accept Irving Kristol's distinction between foreign policy (the defense of interests) and diplomacy (the maintenance of [the fiction of] an international order). They have little use for the latter.

They have even less use for multilateralism. Schlesinger is right. They are go-it-aloners. They are the classic isolationists of the right: their ends are nationalist, not internationalist; their means uni-, not multilateralist.

Right isolationism has yet to capture a party, but its proponents, still in opposition, are growing in strength and confidence. Kristol, for example, in his essay "Does NATO Exist?" (his answer is no), makes the most radical case for the United States to get out of Europe. Henry Kissinger probes the idea more tentatively with a proposal (last year in *Time*) for cutting U.S. forces in Europe by "perhaps up to half." Owen Harries follows with a proposal to turn from an Atlantic to a "Pacific Community." (There is an echo here. "General MacArthur," wrote Lippman, "argu[ed] that our interests in Europe are at best an expensive form of philanthropy and that our true destiny is to go it alone in the Pacific and in East Asia.") In Congress, the leader of the effort to cut U.S. troops in Europe is a conservative Democrat, Sam Nunn. Even within an administration that promised a return to a robust internationalism, there is a dissenting column: Caspar Weinberger and the joint chiefs opposed intervention in Lebanon, only reluctantly went along with Grenada, and are now most wary about involvement in Central America. And the Europeans rightly perceive behind much of the conservative enthusiasm for strategic (Star Wars) defense, the promise of an America that relies exclusively on itself for its own defense—the traditional nationalist-unilateralism of the right.

THIS IS THE isolationism of selective disengagement. It is a direct descendant of pre-war conservative isolationism: it wants to redraw the American security perimeter, both to reduce the dangers caused by the current imbalance between ends and means, and to restore American freedom of action that is now so constrained by paralyzing alliances.

Administration officials, charged with the day-to-day management of vast overseas commitments, are not as free as conservative intellectuals (or out-of-power Democrats) to indulge their isolationist instincts in public. Which is what makes Weinberger's November 28, 1984, speech, "The Uses of Military Power," despite concurrent and subsequent qualifications, such a remarkable right isolationist text.

It is remarkable because of its insistence on the hallmarks of right isolationism: nationalism and unilateralism. Weinberger first gives ritual nods to "the fulfillment of our responsibilities as a world power." He does not want to frighten half the world to death. He even makes a point of attacking "people [who] are in fact advocating a return to post-World War I isolationism." But interspersed with internationalist boilerplate are references to a much narrower definition of American interests: "We should only engage *our* troops if we must do so as a matter of our *own* vital national interest. We cannot assume for other sovereign nations the responsibility to defend *their* territory—without their strong invitation—when our own freedom is not threatened." (Emphasis Weinberger's.) It is hard to imagine *any* foreign event that can threaten the freedom of a continental power protected by two oceans and possessing 10,000 nuclear warheads. And invitations, no matter how strong, are easily ignored. When Egypt closed the Straits of Tiran in May 1967, Israel asked Britain, France,

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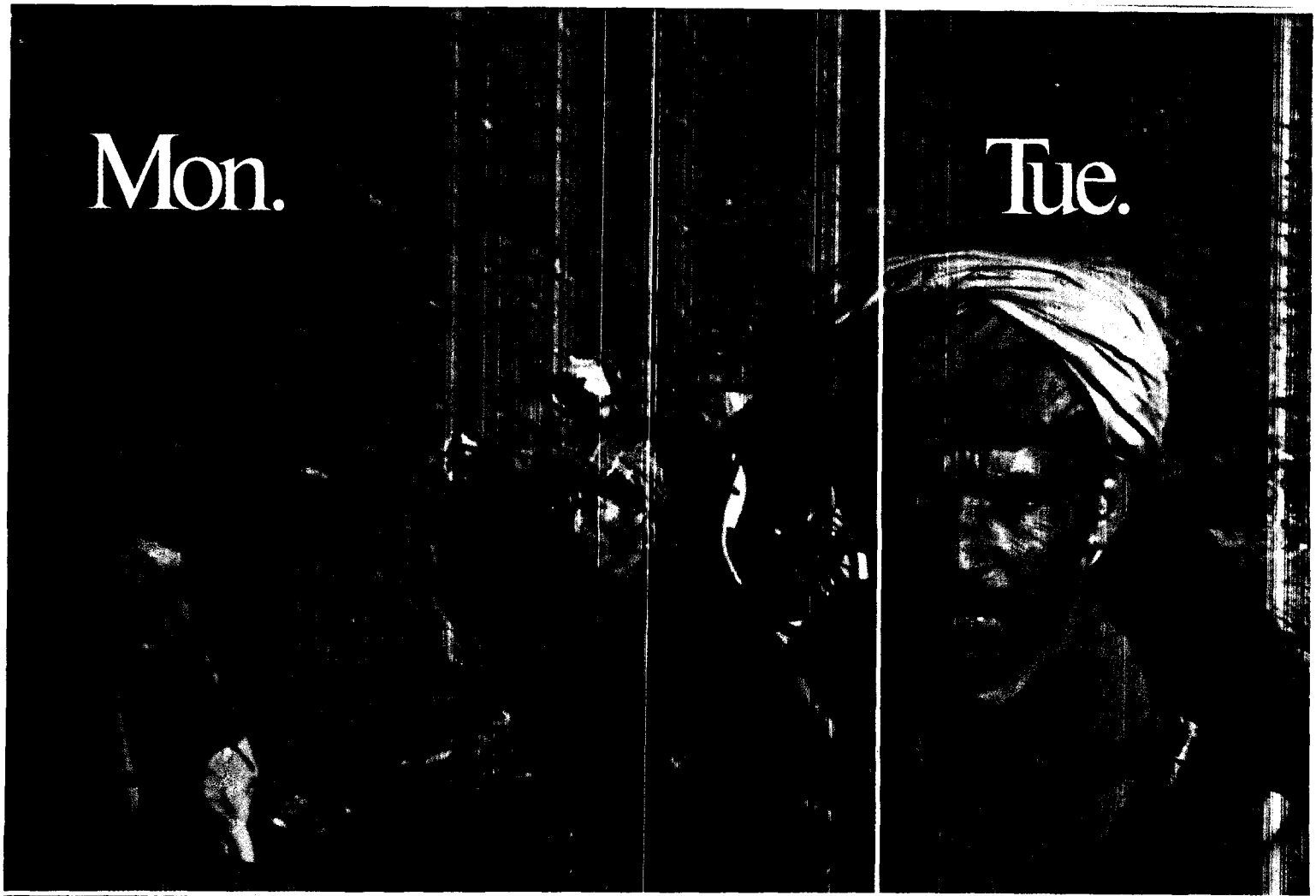

Thur.

Fri.

The week the Afghanistan war was closed to the press, but our reporter pressed on.

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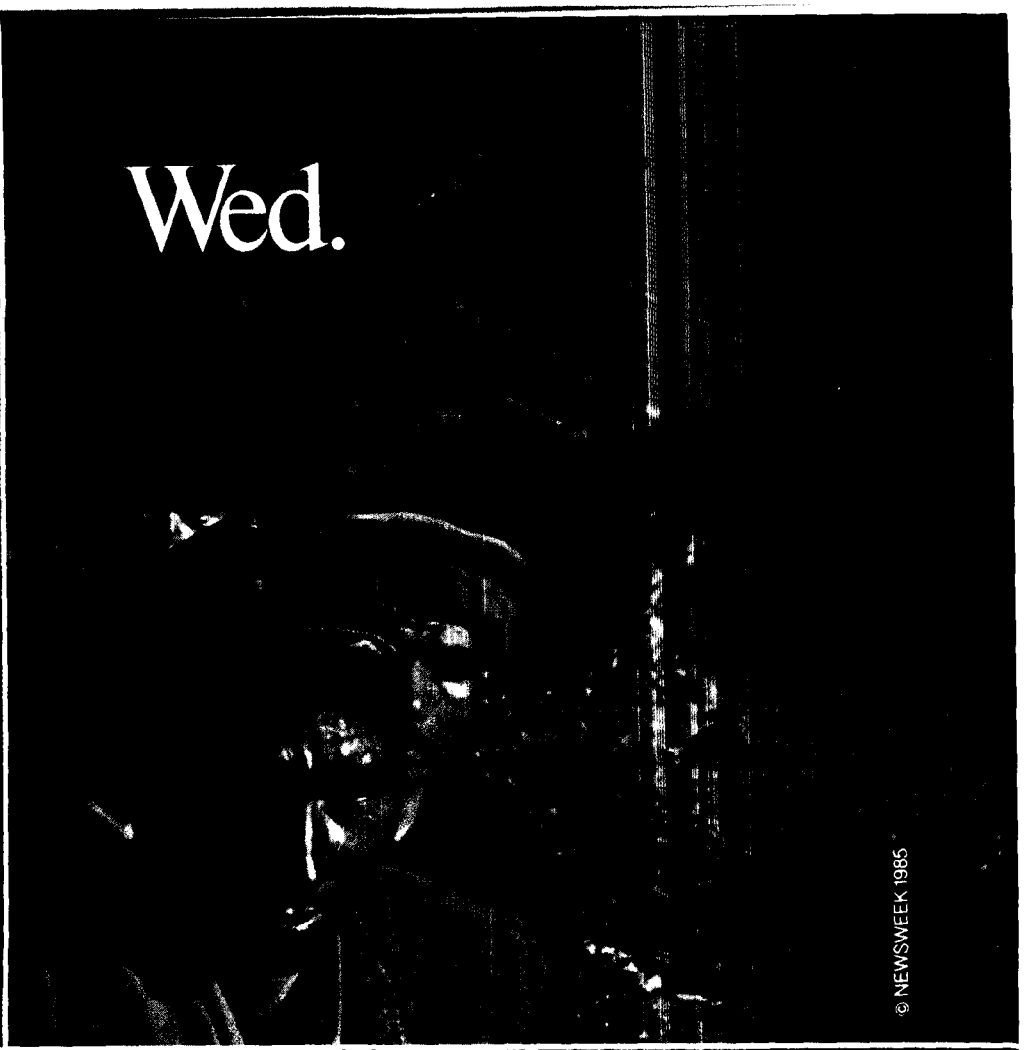

Sat.

Sethi has used her contacts there to great advantage. On New Year's Day last year, Fidel Castro granted her his first interview with an American reporter in over five years. President Pinochet of Chile met with Sethi for his first interview with an American reporter in 10 years. And her interview with Vietnam's Prime Minister Pham Van Dong was a catalyst in the administration's efforts for the release of all Amerasian children in Vietnam.

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and the United States to honor written guarantees to maintain free passage through the Straits. No one moved a ship.

Weinberger then proceeds to elaborate six conditions for American intervention abroad. Point four is devoted to national interest. "We must continuously keep as a beacon applied before us the basic questions, *'Is this conflict in our national interest?'* 'Does our national interest require us to fight, to use force of arms?' " (His emphasis.) Not a single mention of international law, multilateral action, or consulting with allies passes Weinberger's lips. The idea that intervention must be "internationally defensible" and "open to independent scrutiny" (two of Mondale's six conditions in his 1983 speech) is totally alien to right isolationism.

BUT WHAT is being rejected is not just multilateralism as a means of action. Weinberger is obviously uncomfortable with internationalism as a guide to action. The references to national interest, as opposed to alliance obligations, are reinforced by point five: no intervention without advance assurance of domestic support. This clearly is a policy of prudence (and perhaps a backhanded slap at Secretary of State George Shultz for Lebanon). But it is more than that.

This particular requirement establishes profound limitations on any possible intervention. Domestic opinion, in advance of any intervention, is likely to define national interests very narrowly. "No unpopular war" is almost a prescription for "no wars," certainly for none at the margins of the free world. Domestic support can be counted on (apart from three-day mismatches like Grenada) only for answering direct attacks on the United States: Pearl Harbor and nothing less. This is the *pre*-war standard. Indeed, in January 1938 congressional isolationists went exactly the suggested Weinberger route: they brought to a vote a constitutional amendment to make war, except in response to invasion, subject to a national referendum. It took an extraordinary appeal from President Roosevelt to keep the House from passing what all knew would amount to (again: save direct attack) a guarantee of isolation. To insist on prior domestic support is to reinforce the narrowest nationalist basis for intervention.

Where does nationalist-unilateralism lead? What commitments are to be given up? Right isolationists draw different lines. Weinberger's criteria necessarily exclude from America's defensive perimeter much of the Third World. Some of the old right, like Barry Goldwater, are Monroe doctrinaires. They want to draw a line around this hemisphere. ("Restore the Monroe Doctrine" graces the letterhead of the Conservative Caucus.) About Europe there is great ambivalence. When Owen Harries suggests a turn from an Atlantic to a Pacific Community, he is suggesting more than a tactical ploy to force Europe to defend herself and to permit one form of American disengagement. He is echoing the classic isolationist policy of shutting the eastern door and pursuing American destiny to the west, where American actions have traditionally been less encumbered. Even the logical extreme of the right isolationist view—Fortress America—has its proponents (the most articulate of which was Robert Tucker in his 1972 book, *A New Isolationism*).

Although right isolationists draw different lines, the sentiment animating their efforts is the same: a sense that America has let itself be drawn into commitments that serve not its interests but that of others. From Washington's farewell address on, that sentiment has always animated classical isolationism, particularly pre-war right isolationism. It was never abandoned, not even during the interlude of Vandenbergian internationalism that immediately followed World War II. Even then, the right never fully renounced its nationalist-unilateralist ideology. It did reconsider tactics. Chastened by the interwar failure of the European system, it came to accept the view that American interests could best be served through American-dominated internationalist vehicles. That domination now ended, many conservatives want out. They want to redraw the lines of the American sphere, and withdraw to its unencumbered defense.

THE POLITICAL monopoly enjoyed by postwar internationalism is at an end. It is now faced with a continuing, two-front isolationist challenge. Does internationalism have an adequate defense?

In my view the left isolationist challenge is more easily met. That is because it fails on its own terms. Jesse Jackson's Third World school of American foreign policy, which is not isolationist, is at least coherent. It supports "progressive" (i.e., anti-American) forces abroad and welcomes an encumbering multilateralism and the renunciation of (American) force as the way to further that cause. On the other hand, mainstream Democratic foreign policy, from Hart to Moynihan, professes different goals—the success of the Western idea in the world—but resolutely abjures the means of securing them.

That leads to two results, one dangerous, one merely peculiar. The danger comes from the commitments retained, like the nuclear guarantee for Europe. The enthusiasm on the left for curtailing the military might behind this commitment—the freeze, no-first-use, a moratorium on Pershings, cutting the military budget (which is devoted overwhelmingly to conventional defense)—increases the risk of such commitments. It ensures that were they ever to be challenged and we foolish enough to honor them, the consequences would be catastrophic.

The peculiarity comes from the means renounced. To renounce unpleasant kinds of pressure—those requiring force—is, in effect, to decide for only one kind of intervention: against friends only. The reason is simple. To influence enemies requires the application of means, while to influence friends simply their withdrawal. Hence obsessive Democratic focus on the Philippines, El Salvador, Korea, Taiwan, and so on, regimes that do, in fact, violate Wilsonian ideals—not *because* they are friends of the United States, but because, being friends, they are susceptible to the most passive of foreign policy instruments, the only

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ones left isolationists are prepared to use. To find the origin of this selectivity in a blame-America-first reflex, as does Jeane Kirkpatrick, is to miss the mark. The charge does fit Jesse Jackson but not, for example, Mondale—the choice of San Francisco Democrats—or Hart or Moynihan or Nunn or any other representatives of the party's mainstream. The selectivity of the fervor for reforming the world comes not from anti-Americanism; it is the natural consequence of an incoherent policy that is internationalist in ends but isolationist in means.

RIGHT ISOLATIONISM is more difficult to refute, not because, in my view, it is any less misguided, but because the argument hinges on a question of values, not logic.

Right isolationist logic is powerful. Arthur Vandenberg is said to have turned internationalist when he saw London fall under German V-rocket attack in 1944. "How can there be any immunity or isolation when men can devise weapons like that?" he said. The opposite lesson, elaborated by Robert Tucker among others, is more compelling: it is precisely the new weaponry, specifically, strategic nuclear weaponry, that permits a return to isolation. It restores the conditions that once made such a policy possible: the unilateral possession of a preponderance of deterrent power. In the interwar period the United States did not have that, and suffered the consequences (World War II) of pretending it did not need it. America needed European allies to create a preponderance of power to deter the enemy (the Axis). No longer. Strategic weaponry has given the United States unilateral possession of that deterrent power. In fact, alliances are a threat to U.S. security. They make the United States risk its own national existence for interests (like Europe) on which its physical security does not depend.

Are American troops in Korea and Berlin there to defend American security? It is not so easy a case to make. South Vietnam fell, and with it all of Indochina. Has that jeopardized the physical security of the United States? Even if all the dominoes fell right up to Rio Grande, no adversary in his right mind would dare cross it. In terms of a simple calculation of physical danger, to risk our existence on guarantees to weak and exposed allies is the riskiest of all strategies. We are always listening for the sounds of exploding "powder kegs." An isolated America would not have so cocked an ear.

In the nuclear age, alliances are much harder to justify as physical buffers. The counter to the right isolationist argument, therefore, must begin with the question: What is worth fighting for? If America stands only for its defense, if its mission is physical security—if, in other words, its nationalism is like all other nationalisms—then, indeed, why not as narrow a definition of American interests, as tight a circle around our borders as possible? A Finlandized Europe will trade with the United States. Finland does. And so does the rest of world, which, from Angola to the Soviet Union, is eager for American commerce.

The ultimate response, therefore, to right isolationism must be the assertion that an alliance of free nations, as the locus and trustee of Western values, is a value in itself. In other words, the answer to right isolationism must be Wilsonian.

Not that freedom is indivisible. That woolly Wilsonian claim is both empirically false and dangerous. It is false because freedom has been lost in half of Europe and Indochina—it can be lost in, say, Afghanistan—without it being lost everywhere, certainly not in the United States. It is dangerous because the belief that freedom is indivisible involved us, among other things, in imprudent defenses of freedom in places like Vietnam.

A new Wilsonianism must argue not that freedom is indivisible, but that it is valuable. A sustained internationalism rests on a large vision of America, an America that stands for an idea. Liberty and democracy are intrinsic to American nationhood as they are not, say, to France or Britain, where the state predates the democratic idea. As Tucker admits, "The price of a new isolationism is that America would have to abandon its aspirations to an order that has become synonymous with the nation's vision of its role in the world." He adds, "Isolationism is opposed, among other reasons, because it is equated with indifference to the fate of others. . . . It undoubtedly is and no useful purpose is served by evasiveness on this point."

AND IT IS exactly on this point that the nationalist and the internationalist part ways. The internationalist may decide not to intervene in particular areas for prudential reasons, but not out of indifference. A wise internationalism and right isolationism differ not on prudence but purpose. It is one thing to admit that we will bear not *any* burden, but only *some* burdens—those within our (relatively) reduced means—for the success of freedom. It is another to say that we will bear burdens only for national interest.

A century ago a foreign policy of such narrow nationalism could be consistent with American's idea of itself. America was weak and could indeed best serve the idea of freedom by preserving itself and through the power of example. Today, as a superpower, that is not enough. Action, sometimes unilateral action, is necessary. It is American power that guarantees the survival of freedom. In Europe, the burden of whose defense has grown too heavy for some, the borders of freedom are defined by a thin line of American soldiers, not by the reach of American example. Czechoslovakians know of the American example.

To disengage in the service of a narrow nationalism is a fine foreign policy for a minor regional power, which the United States once was and which, say, Canada or Sweden are now. For America today it is a betrayal of its idea of itself. Most of all, it seems a curious application of American conservatism, which usually holds liberty to be the highest of political values. Does that idea now stop at the nation's shores? □

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Changing Worlds

Kon Ichikawa is one of the lustrous names in Japanese film. Luster, in American context, means that a small fraction of a director's output has been seen here and has been praised. For Ichikawa, that fraction—of a career which began in 1946 and numbers more than 60 films—includes *The Burmese Harp*, *Fires on the Plain*, *Odd Obsession*, and *Tokyo Olympiad*. The first two were powerful antiwar films, the third was about an aging husband's anguish over diminishing sexual power, the last was a documentary. These four films are not typical of his work, but then only his whole career could represent him typically. He is quoted as saying, "I don't have any unifying theme—I just make any picture I like or any that the company tells me to do." The remark may sound indifferent, but it's the indifference of a director whose aesthetic consciousness, as Audie Bock says in *Japanese Film Directors*, is assured "a permanent rank in contemporary film history."

The Makioka Sisters
(R5/S8 Presentation)

Shivers
(New Yorker Films)

Odd Obsession was made in 1958 from *The Key* by Junichiro Tanizaki, considered one of Japan's premier 20th-century novelists. In 1983 Ichikawa filmed *The Makioka Sisters* by Tanizaki, written before *The Key* and regarded even more highly. Tanizaki worked on it for a number of years during the 1940s, composing it as an elegy to a passing society; and the prospect of an Ichikawa film of the book was promising. The film now arrives, and disappoints.

Mine is not the disappointment of someone who knows the novel: I've read only an excerpt in a Donald Keene anthology. But from that excerpt, from Keene's comments, and from the screenplay by Ichikawa and Shinya Hidaka, it's not hard to infer the structure and tone of the whole, long work. The film begins in 1938 in Osaka; there reside four daughters of a deceased wealthy merchant. The four daughters range in age from about 40 to 20, and the older two are married. Through the ties of the four women, their conflicts and differences, their differing views of their place and their future as women, we get insights into a segment—apparently a large segment—of middle-class Japanese life.

The pattern is familiar. The execution is all. The work's value depends on the degree to which the familiar is made to reveal depths that surprise, illuminate, frighten. It seems safe to assume that, in the novel, Tanizaki did what Ozu did in several of his films: the diurnal became a crystal of the infinite. But in Ichikawa's film, the dailiness is all. Paths are faithfully traced, episodes are condensed to screen form and time, readers of the novel presumably are given sufficient recognition points so that they won't feel cheated. Ichikawa has been called in Japan an "illustrator." Well, he wasn't merely an illustrator when he made *Fires on the Plain* from Shohei Ooka's novel or a mere reporter when he made *Tokyo Olympiad*; but for the most part, illustration and social reporting are what we get in *The Makioka Sisters*.

The actual making of the film, moment by moment, is predictably exceptional. The compositions, the editing, the rhythms are all done with surety and taste. The color, by a longtime collaborator, Kiyoshi Hasegawa, has a gentle unsubtlety, as if to suggest early color films. One oddity, recurrent in Japanese film, is the use of Western music. I couldn't connect Handel's "Largo" with any of the several scenes it underscores.

By now it's an accepted stratagem in the filmmaking of Eastern Europe to use Stalinism as a code term for current oppressions. Current Eastern European governments may even encourage this stratagem to help prove their difference from the past. One of the best films in this vein that I know is the Hungarian *Angi Vera* by Pál Gábor ("Innocents," TNR, January 19, 1980), about a young woman of independent spirit who is re-educated so that she ends up using her independence of spirit in the service of conformity. Now comes a Polish film, *Shivers*, which tells an analogous story. In the early 1950s a boy of 13 is sent to one of the Stalinist re-education camps in Poland. He was raised in a liberal, humanist home. At the time he is sent off, his father is arrested and imprisoned. The cause of the arrest is unspecified in the film, as it may well have been in the father's life. The boy and his father are released about the same time. The boy is well warped by now; the father is worn but tacitly hopeful about his son.

Shivers was written and directed by Wojciech Marczewski in 1981, his second film. (His first has not yet been seen here.) *Shivers* was a prizewinner at the 1982 Berlin Festival and was the official Polish entry in the 1983 Academy Awards competition for best foreign film; but the Polish government withdrew it.

I'd assume that Marczewski knew

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Falasha: Exile of the Black Jews. A documentary, shot mostly in Ethiopia, the Sudan, and Egypt, that reveals much on its fascinating, grim subject. (Reviewed 2/18/85)

1984. John Hurt and Richard Burton are splendid as Winston and O'Brien. The visual texture is excellent. The script, predictably, sticks to plot essentials. (2/4/85)

A Passage to India. This Forster adaptation could be called honorable, except that the word suggests dullness. David Lean's film is excitingly acted, beautifully made. (1/21/85)

Witness. Oxymoron: a lovely thriller. Trite situation—a murder witness (a child) in danger from the killers—but it's set in Amish country, which is the real protagonist. (2/18/85)

SK

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Angi Vera, and if I'm right, this knowledge has been both a help and a hindrance to him. He wanted to add, not to imitate: he wanted to contribute more to the grim subject, rather than merely retail the same theme with different characters and places. *Angi Vera*, good as it is, is made in quite conventional narrative style. Marczewski has (therefore?) made his film in an astringent, un-"classic" style, using angles and ellipses to incise the story sharply and unsentimentally. For example, when the boy is sent to camp, we see nothing of the trip or the arrival; we skip all the intervening detail, which is a welcome omission, and simply take up his life in the camp. (Not a rough barracks: it's an expropriated mansion set in extensive grounds.) Also, Marczewski lets some matters resonate by implication only. The head of the camp, which includes both boys and girls, is a mature and attractive woman, a sincere Communist who likes the boy and who has a maternal-sexual effect on him without any overt action whatsoever. But because of Marczewski's rather dry treatment, and also because the young actor who plays the boy is not markedly appealing, the odd result is that we are moved more by her ideological and human imprisonment than by his.

Marczewski further burdens his picture, in his aim for individuality, with material that distracts attention from his subject to his ingenuity. Occasionally the camera tilts, the frame freezes, and we hear the click of a still-camera lens. But those moments seem no more memorable than many others, and the camera theme is never fulfilled. The film opens with, and later repeats, a shot of newspapers being blown around a railroad yard. Maybe because of the newspaper itself, the shot means something to Poles; here it seems a common image of cheerless drifting. A sexually suggestive moment is included at the camp—a girl playing with the boy's finger—as if Marczewski wanted to be sure not to omit notice of approaching puberty. The low point of the director's ingenuity, a moment clearly designed to elicit praise, is one in which the boy washes a framed portrait of Marx: the water rolling down the glass on the picture suggests tears rolling down Marx's cheeks.

My argument certainly is not that directing must be invisible in order to be good. (Think of the best Jancsó.) But ingenuity is an added risk: it must resolve into a communicating style or else, as here, it blocks our view.

Portrait of Rilke as a Young Man.

SEINE AND SENSIBILITY

BY WILLIAM H. GASS

WHEN Rilke arrived in Paris on August 28, 1902, and found a room at 11 rue Toullier, he believed he had come there to collect himself, to study in the libraries with one dreamy eye on a distant degree, and to meet the controversial sculptor Auguste Rodin, whose work he had received a commission to write about. Rilke had recently married and fathered a child; his own father was no longer paying him the small stipend which had supplied Rilke for some years with the simplest of essentials. So the commission, scarcely munificent, nevertheless seemed at least like a life ring, if not a rescue launch.

Rilke not only needed an immediate income, he found it necessary, now, to think of the future, of a career of some kind, a useful pursuit. But he had begun to slip out of the knot of his marriage in the moment that he tied it. As time went on his habit of letting go of things even as he reached out for them would become firmly established; although, when he later wrote about such "partings," it suddenly seemed to be the objects themselves or the beckoning women

William H. Gass is the author, most recently, of *Habitations of the Word* (Simon and Schuster). This essay will appear as the introduction to *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*, translated by Stephen Mitchell, to be published this spring.

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who broke the lines of attraction and connection.

How I have felt it, that nameless state
called parting,
and how I feel it still: a dark, sharp, heartless
Something that displays, holds out with
unapparent hands,
a perfect union to us, while tearing it in two.

With what wide-open eyes I've watched
whatever
was, while calling to me, loosening its hold,
remaining in the road behind as though all
womankind,
yet small and white and nothing more
than this:

a waving which has blown the hair
beyond its brow,
a slight, continuous flutter—scarcely now
explicable: perhaps the tremor of a plum
tree
and the bough a startled cuckoo has set
free.

When Rilke went to Paris, he was in full retreat from the noise of infants and their insistent needs; from the dull level of everyday life he had reached the instant his romance with the country cottage had subsided and intimacy's repeated little shames had reasserted their reality. He was returning, he felt, to the world of his work, and the prospect of going to Paris for the first time, as it would be, was therefore welcome to more than one of his selves. If Rilke approached Paris with eagerness and relief, however, and found Rodin, indeed, a genius he could quite decently idolize, Paris grasped his outstretched spirit with a pair of gnarled and beggarly hands that wrung nothing but outcry out of him, mercilessly squeezing him until body and soul were only a dry husk around rented air.

RILKE had written poems on poverty and death, but up to now he had really known neither. From the first he had possessed, as a poet, enormous technical facility. Sentiment's superficial song came easily to him. Heine had held his heart longer than was necessary to warm it. While waiting for the muse, he struck his poses and handed out pamphlets containing his work to passers-by on Prague's more notable streets, as if giving away bread to the poor in spirit. At 26, Rilke still seemed an adolescent youth and self-struck poet whose glibness was no longer a gift to either his art or his attitudes. It was as if he saw the people, actions, and objects of the world as basins in which he might empty the apparently boundless bladder of his being.

Now he was alone, in effect a runaway, nearly friendless, fearful, living in a shabby rented room in a squalid neighborhood: the pale fleck of a fly's egg in spoiling meat; and as poor as the poor all about him were poor, the poor who were dying nearby him in pallid strips like sprayed weeds. When he walked the mile or two to Rodin's atelier on the rue de l'Université; or took, from the Gare Montparnasse, the 20-minute train ride to Meudon, Rodin's modest villa in the country; or crossed a few streets to the Bibliothèque Nationale, where he was reading about the architecture of the great medieval cathedrals, he encountered everywhere figures like himself: lonely, grubby, ill, forlorn, although by now they were so at home in their hopelessness that the furniture of their fate seemed almost comfortable (for what else would there ever be but this? *This* was the world). And then at Rodin's the master would suddenly appear, larger than duty, to draw Rilke into a crowd of dazzlingly white plaster casts, against which one's dark trousers threw an insipid shadow.

IN ONE moment, the sculptor's purposeful presence would replace an otherwise empty "now" with creative life. There would be folios of sketches to examine, a model also, odd lunches taken in the company of the sculptor's addled wife; there would be Rodin's laugh, his open and intense gaze on every surface and every hollow like an exploratory hand; his unfinicky, robust lust for the visible and invisible alike. There would be his direct and simple advice: to watch, work, and have patience. For work was a continual necessity, he said: to work and to have a woman. But it was certainly dismaying as well—this unashamed physicality, this utter concentration upon a piece of stone to whose shape he would gradually give the undulating surface of some soon-to-be-living thing.

On other days Rilke would turn in from noisy streets to enter the public quiet in which books are read or significant objects contemplated: a space that equally enclosed the spaces of texts and dusty cabinets of sleeping things. Sometimes the poet would try to rest in his room, to write, where an unsteady table, sagging bed, and single window indifferently surrounded what remained of a soul that had fled into the interior of the self, coming up occasionally to peer cautiously out of the ports of the eyes.

While in Rodin's studio, he was in a vibrant and creative present; while in the library, he could visit an equally creative and living past; but in his room or in the streets of Paris, or even in himself, it seemed, there were only the failed, the sick, the pitiable, the threatening, the ugly. Rodin showed him who he ought to be; Paris demonstrated where and what he really was. The difference was the width of a wound.

IF RILKE had fled his family, it was with his wife's leave, for she was soon to follow him after depositing little Ruth on Granny's stoop like a basket packed with orphan. Still his guilt, the relatively petty quality of his accomplishments, his lack of ordinary skill, his poverty and consequent dependency made him an outcast, a stranger in a world of strangers, as he would later write. More and more, there was less and less difference to be discerned between himself and *les misérables* around him. "Regard! Observe!" came the command, but it was difficult indeed to face one's face reflected from the sooty stones, the soiled eyes, the pebbled skin, the unclean clothes one saw in the streets. Features followed him—buildings, hoardings, windows watched—or they parted like wet paper or adhered like paint to distraught palms. "I sometimes press my face against the iron fencing of the Luxembourg in order to feel a little distance, stillness, and moonlight," Rilke writes his wife, Clara, "but in that place, too, is the heavy air, heavier still from the scents of the too too many flowers they have crowded together in the constraint of the beds. . . ."

Thus Rilke, as if obeying Rodin's advice, visits the Jardin des Plantes, where he will find the panther's gaze so worn from passing through the bars that it sees nothing more; he also frequents fountains, tosses bread crumbs from benches, watches the pigeons peck about in the gravel. He searches desperately inside himself for some spiritual strength (as in his letters he advises his wife to do when she arrives). He goes to Cluny, where he sees the celebrated unicorn tapestries, to the Trocadero, the Louvre. For the lonely, they invented museums.

There was no painter's autumn for

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the desiccated leaves that had begun to fall in August, so that now, in September, they are rattling down the dry paths in the parks, uttering, as if insects were calling out to one another, that brittle and bitter sound that signifies the irreversible absence of life.

The leaves are falling, falling from far away,
as though a distant garden died above us;
they fall, fall with denial in their wave.

And through the night the hard earth falls
farther than the stars in
solitude.

We all are falling. Here,
this hand falls.
And see—there goes an-
other. It's in us all.

And yet there's One whose
gently holding hands
let this falling fall and
never land.

Rilke writes long letters to Clara about Rodin, about his reading, about Botticelli, about Leonardo, about a Paris brimming with sadness. He is beginning to prepare for a book whose beginning has not yet arrived. We sometimes forget, thinking of him as a poet, which is certainly natural enough, that Rilke was a master of German prose; that he wrote far more prose than he did poetry; that much of it is as astonishingly beautiful as prose can be, and as terrifying too; not simply in his notorious essay on dolls (which frightened females) or in the theoretical fancies of "Primal Sound" (which charmed them) or with the angry eloquence of "The Young Workman's Letter" or in the painful, and painfully prepared, pages of *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*, that singular novel. The prose is there in those countless, carefully composed, ample, and always elegantly indited lines, drawn out of his loneliness like silk threads unwound from a cocoon: the correspondance that kept him, in his isolation, a social being.

These letters are sometimes shaded by self-pity. They are sometimes too supplicating, dandified, indulgent (the poseur is the other side of this poet); but they are invariably sensitive and thoughtful, often full of the unexpected in being raw, direct, and harsh. Certainly they are rich, intense, frequently breathtaking: letters that could create a passion and stimulate an affair, for real acts of love occasionally covered the white sheets, and his skillful writer's hand could manage to touch even the most guarded heart. They are letters it must have taken—sometimes—more than a day to compose and copy over; and for their recipients, hours of rereading and rest before they would be able to recover. Rilke's writing *is* breathtaking: it falls upon the center of the spirit like a blow.

RAINER MARIA RILKE BY DAVID SCHORR

By early spring—ill in every element and tatter—Rilke leaves for Viareggio, an Italian resort near Pisa that he favored for a time; and then for the summers, and still wan, he decides to return to Worpswede, the art colony close to Bremen where he met his wife. It is here, with Paris safely over several hills on the calendar, that he is finally able to find a voice for his fears. He begins to send to Lou Andreas-Salomé, his former lover and now a faithful and most valued friend, those stupendous letters that are the actual origin and part of the early text of *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*. These long letters to Lou could not have been dashed off. They clearly come from notes, from prose trials and errors, so that when Rilke revises sections of them for inclusion in the novel they are already in their third kind of existence.

It is in Rome, however, on February 8, 1904 (always a propitious, hard, deep month for Rilke's work), that the project at last takes the sort of shape that begs for a name. Rilke had initially thought to title these pages *The Journal of My Other Self*, and in many ways it is a better choice than the one he settled on. The novel we have now is made of two notebooks of nearly equal length, yet none of these entries is very notelike unless a musical meaning is meant. The prose is too polished, the thought too refined, the sentiments too considered. The prose is constantly pushing at its edges, enlarging its capacities for expression.

There can be little doubt, either, that the work is therapeutic and projective; that in its pages Rilke endeavored to confront, and overcome, the nightmares of his present life. True, it is about another self, because even if his surrogate's name has the same phonological shape as his own, it is the northern, Dane-touched Rilke who appears as a character in the novel, not the sensual, southern one. It is not the Malte who sees and speaks of ghosts, but the Rilke who harkens to the angels, who writes it and, in writing it, succeeds in escaping its protagonist's ambiguous fate.

Nonetheless, the word "journal" suggests that these spoon-sized paragraphs are likely to contain doses of daily life's more commonplace medica-

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tions; and that a familiar temporal progression is going to give a straightforward course to the work, when it is the psychological climate and not the clock that counts. It is a felt world that arises around us. At the same time, the phrase "of my other self" identifies the author with his fictional agent so narrowly that the wider reaches of neither can be appreciated. Even if every observation in the text has been brought up from its low birth in rude fact, and every thought and feeling is one that Rilke at one time entertained like a guest for lunch; even if some of the transformations come to no more, immediately, than making an address ("11 rue Toullier") into a date ("September 11, rue Toullier")—the sum of the alterations, omissions, and additions is significant because Rilke saw and thought and felt strongly about far more things than he permits Malte to see and think and feel about. Rilke (as any fine novelist must) will see "all round" his hero the way Henry James once arrogantly claimed to see "all round" Flaubert.

Malte's extraordinary lucidity may mislead us about the bars that frame his vision. There is no Rodin in this book to humble Malte's artistic claims; there is no mention of the glory and the menace of Cézanne, who meant so much to the development of Rilke's art during the time he spent writing this book; there is no intimation of success or greatness; there are no passages, such as those that occur in his letters to Clara, for all their gloomy remonstrances, that evoke the vitality and sensuality of the city.

There is simply a sudden end to the notebooks, as if their author had no interest in beginning a third, or as if the third were lost, or as if Malte Laurids Brigge were no longer alive.

NO. RILKE is not Malte. Yet Malte is Rilke. Just as matter and mind, for Spinoza, were essential but separate aspects of one natural whole, so Malte is an aspect of Rilke—Rilke seen with one "I." And Malte, when he describes the remaining interior wall of a demolished house (to choose a celebrated example), is penetrating more fully into things than Rilke or Rodin or any one of us would if we were merely walking by on some Parisian sidewalk, because this vision, like so many others, is an observation taken home, and taken to heart, and held warmly there until it rises like bread. Anyone can stand still and take notes. Quite a different eye or recording hand constructs one thing out of its response to another. It is the artful act of composition that creates the emotional knowledge that such passages contain—the metaphors of misery and shame and decay that arise like imagined odors from the wall.

Thus Rilke comes into possession of this knowledge in the same moment Malte does; but he does so (and consequently suffers a stroke of synesthesia, smelling the ugliness he has just seen) because he is imagining Malte. And Malte, to be Malte, must make these discoveries; must run in horror from this wall that he feels exposes his soul to every passerby like a flung-open coat. One probably cannot say it too often: writing is, among other things, an activity that discovers its object; that surprises itself with the meanings it runs into, and passes sometimes with apologies, or recognizes with a start, like an old friend encountered in a strange place.

RILKE has little idea where his project is heading. It has no head: that is the trouble. Bits and pieces of his book are accumulating. They have a thematic and emotional unity. They are uncentered insights. That's all, and the pain of Paris has receded somewhat. To finish his work he will have to return to Paris eventually, but the old wounds won't open as widely as before. How to continue? Worse: Why continue? The difficulty is familiar. To rebleed isn't easy.

Rilke has recently reviewed the posthumous writings of an obscure Norwegian poet. It is a collection of scratched-over jottings and aborted beginnings, a jumble that he says was at bottom just movement, nervous twitches of attention: "and this world of moods and voices trembled and revolved around the peculiar silence left behind by one who has died." At first, Rilke had thought he would attach a small preface to the notebooks indicating to the reader how they had presumably been acquired, but later decided against it, which was wise: first, because to pretend to honesty by calling a mess by its right name will not remove it; second, because the fragmentary and chaotic condition of the text at that time needed no further emphasis (even the suggestion of loose-leafery in the novel's name is enough to mislead many critics), and because now Malte's body, as well as the fate of his soul, lies in a deeper darkness than mere dirt or damnation can contrive.

Fictions have large but brittle bones and suffer frequent fractures and dislocations. Their legs limp a long time after the bones have knit. Unfortunately, Rilke was an accomplished interrupter. He travels: first to pillar, then to post. He becomes a professional guest; he lives in other people's houses, in hotels, in rented rooms. Unfamiliar mirrors become his temporary friends. For a time, he resides in Rome. Then he visits Scandinavia. He complains about the uglification of Capri. He lectures: first hither, then yon. In Vienna, before a reading of "the death of the Chamberlain" section of *Malte*, he has a nosebleed. Hofmannsthal is solicitous and offers to substitute himself if necessary. At Meudon, he watches Rodin work on the bust of George Bernard Shaw. He occupies himself with his so-called "thing poems," but the truth is that he is avoiding the failure he fears. He is filling his life with inconsequence. And if the novel cannot be completed, if some sort of whole cannot be made of it, Rilke will become his other self.

BACK IN Paris (it is now 1907) his book begins to mature and assume a shape, but there is an important change of tone. The second part, or afterhalf, is a progressive transformation of the thematic material of the first. Malte's early obsessions (with alienation, fear, poverty, loneliness, art, disease, death) continue to occupy his thoughts, and figures from the past are still called up. But Malte's meditations on death, for instance, are first mingled with, and then gradually replaced by, his reflections on the notion of a nonpossessive passion (the idea of one's own *tod* is supplanted by an ownerless *liebe*). Loneliness is more and more that emancipating distance between lovers, which we have already seen symbolized in the wave that is both greeting and goodbye. Alienation begins to look like a defiant freedom. Other kinds of dreams, and different ghosts, preoccupy Malte now: the indistinct forms of saintly women, temporally distant kings. His graphic impressions of Parisian lowlife are overshadowed by his equally intense experiences of ancient texts, often equally grim and macabre, particularly demonstrated by his grisly description of the maggot-infested, rosette-shaped wound in the center of the chest of Charles the Bold. What is said, early

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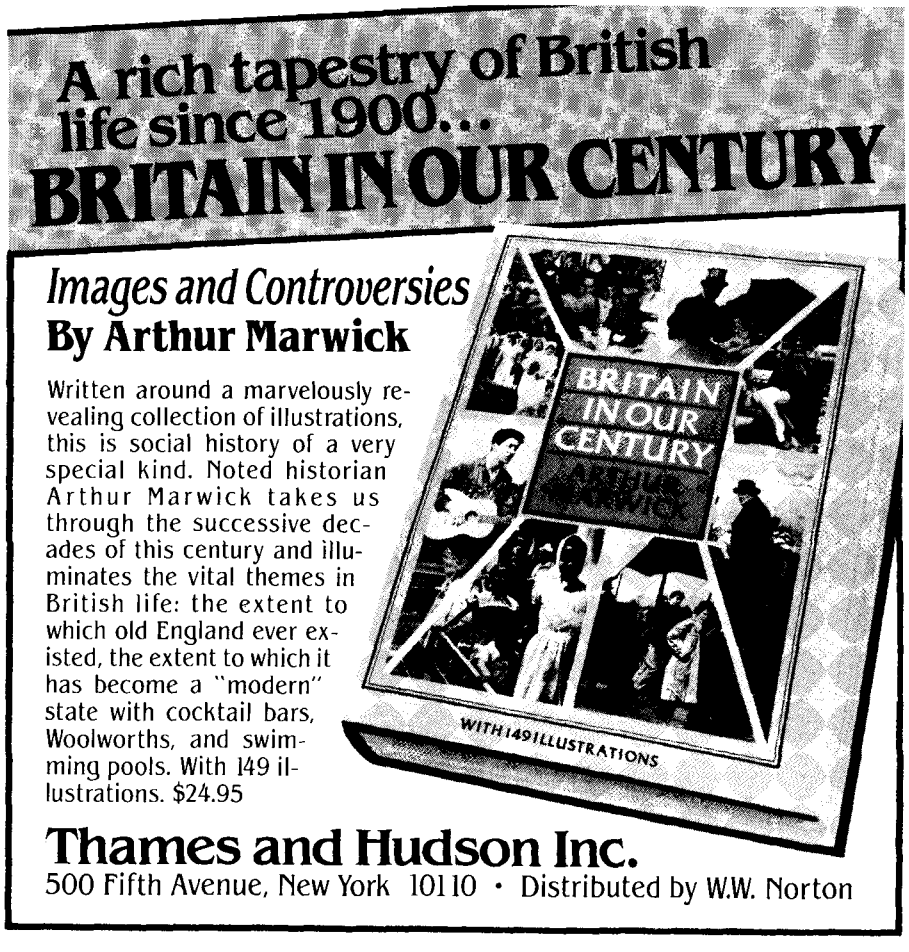
in the first notebook, to be "the main thing" (that is, to survive), is no longer, in the second, "the main thing" at all ("the main thing is just to keep drawing," to remain faithful to one's art). And the initial commandment, to learn to see, is followed by another later: to take on and learn the task of love.

THE FINAL section of the first notebook, and the initial section of the next, are both given over to a description of the *Dame à la Licorne* tapestries, which are on display in the Cluny Museum, and to the girls who come to contemplate and sketch them. These pages form a hinge between the novel's two halves. The girls are from good families, Malte imagines, but they have left their homes; no one any longer takes care to see that all the buttons down the backs of their dresses are properly fastened. They are prodigal daughters, entranced momentarily by emblems, by this ethereal, floating, simultaneous, enigmatic world . . . a woven world, static, pictorial, plastic, even as this novel is, although its images are rarely so benign. And the young girls, enamored, begin to draw. The objects they wish to reflect on their tablets, perhaps as the mirror that the woman holds reflects the unicorn and the unicorn's lone white horn back at itself, are, in their way, eternal objects—images that can be safely, purely loved. Here all passions come to rest like a splash caught by a camera so the wild drops glint like gems, and their frantic rush remains serenely in one place, in the path of a few threads.

In their families, Malte remarks of the girls, religion is no longer possible. "Families can no longer come to God." And in families, if one shares an end or object equally with all its other members, "each gets so shamefully little." And if one tries to gain a little more of liberty or local love or leisure for one's self, disputes will arise. Such thoughts, again, approach those of Spinoza. These girls, before they have known the fat but actually fragile pleasures of the flesh, are able to lose themselves in their drawings for a moment; lose themselves, and thereby realize another kind of love: a love that allows them to take into an almost unfolded soul, like a bee between hesitant petals, "the unalterable life that in these woven pictures has radiantly opened in front of them." Of course, as ordinary girls—as anybody's kids—they want to change, grow up, have their loneliness embraced by another's loneliness. They believe they want to enjoy that promised world where one pleasure is supposed to follow another like sweetmeats tamely to the mouth. Yet not in all young women is the shining, still image of this other—ethereal—love suppressed. And Malte begins to recite the names of the "saved ones," his "blessed"—those whose dedication survives all indifference, cruelty, or rejection, because it contains a love that refuses to enslave or possess its object, but paradoxically insists upon increasing the selfhood, the freedom, the plenty, the being of what is loved.

Rilke was a rather accomplished caricaturist, even as a child, and his eye is a painterly and plastic one. It is his punishment as a poet not to be able to shape and fondle and bring forth *things*. The lyric poem, too, of which he was one of the last great masters, is only typographically a linear event. Its words interact in all directions to produce an entity whose nature it is to occupy a space—a space that song sings us through like a gracious guide from room to room, but whose structure we grasp as a single simultaneity.

The eyes, the lips of the reader move, then, and as they move, the music of the work begins; those moving lips sustain it. But for this great novel, it is as if the eyes were lighting here, then there, upon the surface of a series of tapestries, observing in each place the signs: symbols like the figures of the lion and the lady, the little dog, the silver moons sung above an oval island. Another significant clue to the character of this fiction is contained in the passage that almost immediately follows Malte's meditation upon *la Dame à la Licorne*; namely, the section in which Malte remembers when his mother unrolled for him the antique pieces of lace she had collected. Malte, even more susceptible to "ecstasy" and loss of self as a child than he will be as an adult, is gratefully absorbed into the fanciful realms their lacelight shapes create. He becomes enmeshed in the luxurious leaves and tendrils of one design; he crosses the bleached fields of another, suffering from its chill white winds, its frost. And in the weave where he is happily caught are also the women who sewed and directed and knotted the threads—there, in the linen, in lieu of a lesser heaven. These epitomal pages, which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are so occupied with ghostlike, archetypal, and mystical episodes, also include this epiphany of their novel's slow unspooling movement.

Like the tapestries, the laces have affixed yet enrapturing aesthetic design, and their delicate art redeems, from a life of merely "what's expected," those women who might have been otherwise wholly wasted.

> And if one day all we do and suffer done
> should seem suddenly trivial and strange,
> as though it were no longer clear
> why we should have kicked off our childhood shoes
> for such things—would not this length
> of yellowed lace, this densely woven swatch
> of linen flowers, be enough to hold us here?
> See: this much was accomplished.
>
> A life, perhaps, was made too little of, who knows?
> a happiness in hand let slip; yet despite this,
> for each loss there appeared in its place
> this spun-out thing, not lighter than life,
> and yet perfect, and so beautiful that all our so-be-its
> are no longer premature, smiled at, and held in abeyance.

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Rilke has basely encouraged and nobly earned the affection of many fine women by the time his novel appears in 1910, although their numbers will increase and although he is fully aware of what these feelings normally mean. His conception of an intransitive love is certainly a defense of his own needs and an apology for his own behavior, but that does not lessen its interest or even increase its novelty, since it is at least as old as the average idea.

Because you are loved, Rilke found (and he interprets the parable of the Prodigal Son in these terms when he chooses to conclude *Malte Laurids Brigge* with it), you are expected to serve your lover, whose feelings have been left like a kitten in your care. Because you are loved, you become the victim of many benevolences that your lover wishes to bestow upon you, but which you are scarcely prepared to receive. Because you are loved, your work, which is a rival much admired but not more jealously betrayed for all that, will have to step aside so that the loving one can be comforted by your attention, assured of your devotion by the degree to which you are prepared to neglect yourself, abandon your principles, release your dreams. Because you are loved, you will be offered a physical intimacy that will be perceived as conferring spiritual rights. Because you are loved, you are now fuel for another's fire; and the Prodigal Son does not wish to burn from outward in. The Prodigal Son flees the embrace of the world, and when he returns he does not desire to be forgiven his departure. "To be loved means to be consumed in flames. To love is to give light with inexhaustible oil. To be loved is to pass away; to love is to endure." These are Malte Laurids Rilke's hard words. And they have provoked rather stern, angry, and anguished responses.

HOWEVER, to anyone whose work has to do with the unity of heart and mind in the service of some truth, or the pursuit of some distant ideal of justice or beauty, these words do not seem wide of the mark but rather are its eye. For when one compares the concern of the poet for poetry, the philosopher for the good, or of the physicist for the more abstractly material formulation of what's finally real, all other adorations (now that the love of the gods has got the go by) come to resemble merely plant or animal appetites. And how well we know those plant and animal appetites! And how they put the objects of their solicitude in immediate danger of their teeth, in more distant, slower danger of their roots.

"WHO speaks of victory," Rilke writes in one of his poems, "to endure is all." The love of God that Malte Laurids Brigge yearns for is actually a license for his own love. Even when the courtly poet loves, in love with love itself and each of its amorous rites, the object of that love, already half imaginary, must nevertheless be worthy. Its pursuit, its contemplation must furnish the inspiration necessary to sustain the poet's efforts. It need not do anything, but must *be*. Spinoza cannot call "God" some ignominious thing; and although Nature, as that divinity, is certainly indifferent to him, God *is* God, and deserving of the devotion of such a mind as his. When Art or God or the Good returns one's love, permission is the substance of it: they have allowed that service simply by meriting it. Rilke's saintly women, who begin by worshiping vain men—earthly objects, leafless twigs—end by transubstantiating them. There is no other way. Malte's choice of deity, it would appear when the novel subsides, has not yet offered him that opportunity. Hence this strenuous attempt, to substitute for his obsession with death the practice of a liberating love, cannot be deemed a success. *The Notebooks'* last words make a dismal sound. "He [Malte in the guise of the Prodigal Son] was now terribly difficult to love, and he felt that only One would be capable of it. But He was not yet willing." Here the second book breaks off.

It may be that the love which this work asks for is also of the nonpossessive kind, although it has certainly received a surfeit of the other sort. In any case, by writing it, Rilke succeeded in furthering the art of fiction so far as to make its continued practice forbidding if not impossible. From its readers, as well, *Malte* requires a wholly different dedication; it requires a *gaze*. Paradoxically, it is just such difficulties that drive us on, so that the novel has become more beguilingly daunting for every age of its existence. As readers too—*look!*—brought to a standstill before the page—how wide, now, we must widen our eyes. □

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A Major Minor Poet

Collected Poems 1947-1980 by Allen Ginsberg

(Harper & Row, 837 pp., $27.50)

Remember Allen Ginsberg? Wasn't it he who published that noisy, tirading poem in the fifties—bad words, good tune—just offensive enough to win your heart? Naughty Allen, crazy Allen, the wild zaddik with a fondness for Blake, Wyatt, and Whitman above all, whirling dervishly in public, beard-curling, petal-strewing, eyes agoggle, dancing like a shaggy elf and playing finger cymbals for the delight of Hell's Angels. Barefoot anarchist with cheek. How they loved him, the kids of the sixties, cheering alongside their grandmothers. Remember Prague 1965, when the rebellious Czechs crowned Ginsberg King of the May? Remember Chicago 1968, Ginsberg chanting from a balcony in an effort to exorcise Mayor Daley? Eventually, he would say, the chanting worked.

Then off-again Allen into the seventies, delivering his "Plutonium Ode" to the Pentagon, and squatting like a guru on the railroad tracks in the path of a train carrying radioactive detritus from the Rocky Flats Nuclear Weapons Plant. Tibet in Denver by way of Newark, San Francisco, and the Lower East Side. Ginsberg was everywhere: there for the Beats, the Hips, the Blacks, the Rocks, the Drugs, the Nukes. "If your soul is in your belly, no one can drive you out of your skull." Three years ago, he showed up at Columbia in a professorial suit and a striped tie to celebrate the 25th anniversary of "Howl." He played the reading for laughs. That Allen! What will he do next?

Or should the question be: What has he done at all? It seems a strangely sober act to pick up *Collected Poems 1947-1980*, all 800 pages of it, and read Ginsberg as if he had always, like any poet, asked to be judged by his work. No Jack Kerouac sits beside you beating out the rhythms on coffeehouse tables with the palms of his hands, and assuring you how important Allen's poetry is. This is Ginsberg on his own, sans bells, kids, grandmothers, presenting himself as if he were dead and the 20th century past and he had fallen into line with the poets of the age to see who will make it into the American literature survey courses of 2001. Yet it does not feel fair to judge him in that company.

If one makes comparisons with Eliot, Pound, Lowell, Stevens, or even with Ransom or Robert Penn Warren, the collected Ginsberg does not stand a chance. What these 800 pages prove is that Ginsberg has always been a minor poet; that is, a poet who has produced a few remarkable pieces, but the bulk of whose work shows no philosophical growth (despite its ostentatiously philosophical preoccupations) and rarely any depth. It is no small thing to be a minor poet; few make the list in any century. Ginsberg seems to be aware of his place. In the introduction, he warns that this collection will allow readers to "observe poetic energy as cyclic, the continuum a panorama of valleys and plateaus with peaks of inspiration every few years."

So, in fact, we do observe. When one considers that these poems cover 33 years of personal and national history, most of them lived feverishly, there is a striking sameness to the body of this work. Only Ginsberg's musical brilliance, his perfect pitch, saves the sameness from monotony. In the early poems he sounds like someone who has submerged himself in a tub of Elizabethan lyrics, and as soon as he bubbled up for air, wrote: "Last night I dreamed—of one I love" ("The Night Apple"). That was written in 1950. In 1979 he announced, "After 53 years—I still cry tears—I still fall in love—I still improve" ("Some Love"). He does not, however, improve thematically. A young homosexual becomes an old homosexual. An eager poet becomes a tired one. His politics—if they may be called that—show no change whatever. In "A Poem on America," written in 1951, Ginsberg discovered that "America is like Russia." In "Capitol Air" of 1980, he came up with this: "Truth may be hard to find but Falsehood easy/ Read between the lines our Imperialism is sleazy/But if you think the People's State your Heart's Desire/Jump right back in the frying pan from the fire."

If one has a mind to resent such thoughts, Ginsberg can be terribly irritating; but it seems a mistake to take him seriously as a voice of ideas. His specialty is simply voice, sound. Here is how "Wales Visitation" begins:

White fog lifting & falling on mountain-
brow
Trees moving in rivers of wind
The clouds arise
as on a wave, gigantic eddy lifting mist
above teeming ferns exquisitely swayed
along a green crag
glimpsed thru mullioned glass in valley
raine—

In his *Journals*, published in 1977, Ginsberg wrote that as a young poet he wanted to be like Rimbaud, "and just write perfect things . . . where every word would be glittering and elegant and erotic and romantic and mystical." Grown older, he found himself "saddled now with huge bags of prosaic descriptions, sometimes incomprehensible scenes of incommunicable moments of dreams." For lesser stylists, the long poetic line is a cobra, always

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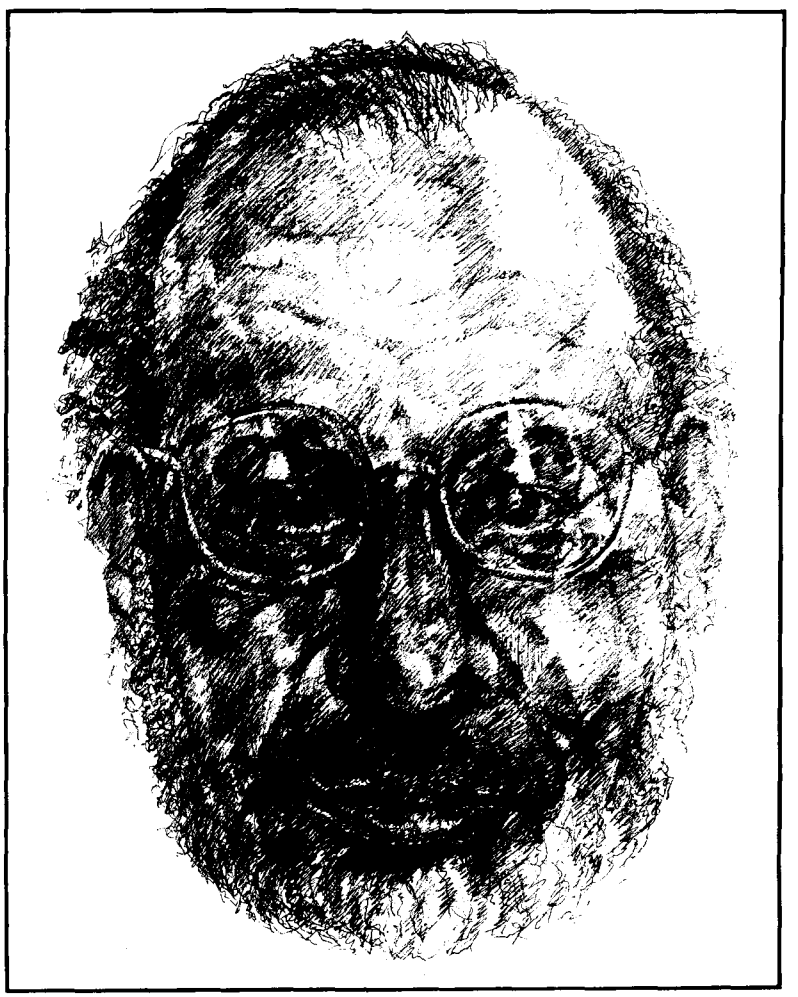
threatening to uncoil into prose. With Ginsberg, his recriminations notwithstanding, nothing really ever sounds wrong—a gift that often protects some very silly lines: "O ass of mystery and night." Then, too, there are lines nothing could protect: "O victory forget your underwear we're free."

That exuberance comes at the close of the famous "Howl." It is a poem worth rereading, especially if one deluded oneself into liking it when it made its loud debut. Read it today, and Ginsberg's self-mockery at the Columbia anniversary reading a few years ago makes great sense. One can grow giggly learning that "the best minds" of the poet's generation "copulated ecstatic and insatiate with a bottle of beer a sweetheart a/package of cigarettes a candle and fell off the bed, and continued/along the floor and down the hall and ended fainting on the wall with/a vision of ultimate cunt and come eluding the last gyzym of consciousness." It makes you wonder what the second best minds were doing. Yet even in "Howl" the voice is clear and arresting. And the generosity in all the poems is abundant. Ginsberg can no more write a cruel line than a dry one. On the whole, however, this is the poetry of language against meaning, words invoked to bring us to our knees, without our really knowing why.

Except for "Kaddish," which is the one great poem in the collection. In his review of the *Collected Poems* in *The New York Times*, Harvey Shapiro described "Kaddish" as well as it might be described: "[Ginsberg] has been able to cut through and summon the dead, to recreate his insane mother, to make his peace with her, more than that, to make a muse of her." Some muse. In the poem Naomi Ginsberg screams, glares, bats her wings to ward off Mussolini, Trotsky, poisons, tape recorders, the FBI. But she will not, cannot, ward off her son. He dogs her through every stage and place of her madness, and she, crazy as she gets, will never lose sight of him. Each is the responsibility, the creator, of the other. Finally Ginsberg quotes a letter he received two days after her death: "The key is in the window, the/key is in the sunlight at the window—I have the key—Get married Allen/don't take drugs—the key is in the bars, in the sunlight in the window."



ALLEN GINSBERG BY DAVID SCHORR

One could close the book on that poem, call that the collected Ginsberg, and be satisfied, often pleased. With a "public poet," however, there seems to be something more to take account of, especially when the poet has led a life as openly hectic as Ginsberg's. Yet what exactly is a public poet? Someone whose poems one would rather listen to than read? Someone who says something about the public as well as to it, who, in a sense, makes a poem of the public? Whitman, Ginsberg's presiding deity, did that. Has Ginsberg done it too, Ginsberg, this weirdness out of the Book of Hosea, this "bearded American fairy dope poet," as he called himself—the Voice of America?

There is a long, anti-Vietnam war poem in the collection, called "Wichita Vortex Sutra," that seems to get at the public poet question, and to sum up Ginsberg as well. At the outset Ginsberg sees America seeing him. Immediately the public poet makes a spectacle of himself: "Kansas! Kansas! Shuddering at last!/PERSON appearing in Kansas!/angry telephone calls to the university." We get the picture, or we think we do. Ginsberg, cowboy priest and rabbi, rides into Kansas, plunking his banjo and absolving the place: "Thy sins are forgiven, Wichita." Inevitably the poem becomes a freedom song:

> What if I sang till Students
> knew I was free
> of Vietnam, trousers, free
> of my own meat,
> free to die in my thoughtful
> shivering Throne?
> freer than Nebraska, freer
> than America—
> May I disappear
> in magic Joy-smoke! Pouf!

Here is Ginsberg in full flower-childishness. Drop your pants and win the war.

But then somewhere in the middle of "Wichita Vortex Sutra" a wholly new tone is taken: "I'm an old man now and a lonesome man in Kansas/but not afraid/to speak my lonesomeness in a car/because not only my lonesomeness/it's Ours, all over America." Read strictly in the context of an anti-war protest, these lines mean little. Read as a dark statement about America's history, they bring us to a pause. It seems true, what Ginsberg says. The country does feel lonesome—not as a consequence of politics, of recurrent isolationism, but as a basic condition. And the country, like Ginsberg, is getting on, an aging lonesome cowboy perpetually riding into Kansas. "Spoken lonesomeness is prophesy," he says, explaining his role.

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The other side of lonesomeness, of course, is extravagant hope. Toward the end of the poem, Ginsberg invites the future to be happy: "Come to my lone presence/into this Vortex named Kansas. . . I here declare the end of the War." Naturally he had to do that. The country hears its own voice echoing the poet's, a congregation in a college auditorium. We entered Kansas like Jesse James and wound up singing like Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*. Thus does Ginsberg create and sustain his public presence. He could not have survived as a poet had he not touched these simple American chords of self-doubt, self-love, self-confidence. It has been said that Ginsberg hates America. My guess is that he is crazy about it.

Which is not to say that he understands the country deeply, or that he thinks about it deeply, at least not in terms that come through in the writing. Analysis is not his strong suit. If one were to see "Wichita Vortex Sutra," or indeed most of Ginsberg's poems, as a mirror held up to the audience, the country would look awfully superficial. Is that what makes a public poet? Someone who handles superficialities beautifully? Not everyone can do it, surely. Only a poet who feels the superficialities in his bones, who believes in everything he appears to contradict, can pull it off. Naomi seemed to realize this, even from the bottom of her madness. Somewhere in Ginsberg's howl is the married man who does not take drugs.

Does the collected Ginsberg represent the collected us? Certainly not, at least in the sense of reaching the nation's real complications. Still, as a guidebook to the national emotional highlights of the past four decades, the book is indispensable. So, evidently, is Ginsberg. Continually changing shapes and sounds, he has managed to outlast better poets by remaining forever current, urgent, with it, whatever "it" happened to be. What a strange national Moses. But maybe not. The two qualities one takes from this collection are sinful innocence and innocent sin. Allen was always a good boy.

ROGER ROSENBLATT

Roger Rosenblatt is a senior writer and essayist for *Time* magazine.

PATIENCE WITH PATIENTS

The Silent World of Doctor and Patient by Jay Katz, M.D.

(The Free Press, 263 pp., $15.95)

We the Victors by Curtis Bill Pepper

(Doubleday & Company, 322 pp., $17.95)

To demonstrate how vast a silence suffuses the world of medicine, Jay Katz quotes two recollections of a dialogue between a patient and his doctor. According to Dr. Philip Blaiberg, the second person ever to receive a heart transplant, the conversation went like this:

> I was lying in bed with eyes closed. . . when I sensed someone at the head of my bed. I opened my eyes and saw a man. He was tall, young, good looking. . . .His hands were beautiful; the hands of a born surgeon.
> "Don't you know me?" he asked.
> "No," I said with little interest, "I don't."
> "I'm Professor Chris Barnard," he said.
> "I'm sorry, Professor" I replied, "but I didn't recognize you. . . . "
> He spoke earnestly. "Dr. Blaiberg, how do you feel about the prospect of a heart transplant operation? You probably know, don't you, that I am prepared to do you next?"
> "The sooner the better," I said fervently, "and I promise you my full cooperation at all times."
> Though our conversation was brief and he stayed only a few minutes, I was immediately impressed with the stature of the man and his air of buoyant optimism. He inspired me with the greatest confidence. . . . Here was a man to whom I would willingly entrust my life.

Dr. Barnard also had occasion to record his impressions:

> I . . . went down to D-I ward where I found Dr. Blaiberg dozing in bed. He looked like Santa Claus, with a tubby belly, red cheeks, blue ears, and a big mouth—except this was no laughing Santa. His mouth was open gasping for air. I nudged him slightly, and he looked at me with elfish eyes. "Dr. Blaiberg? I've come to introduce myself—or do you know who I am?"
> "No, I don't."
> "I'm Professor Barnard."
> "I'm sorry, Professor. . . . "
> "Well, I've come to say hello and see how you are."
> "You can see . . . I'm not well. . . . "
> "Do you know there is a possibility we can help you by doing a heart transplant on you?"
> "Yes, I know."
> "How do you feel about that?"
> "The sooner, the better . . . I'll cooperate in every way." I looked into his eyes to see if there was fear. There was none. . . .He was a company man—one of many. But he was without fear. . . ."Good," I said, "I'll come again soon."

Katz shrewdly interprets both what was said and not said in this meeting. Blaiberg, instantly idolizing his "born surgeon," pledged "full cooperation." Not for him to ask about the odds of success, the drug regimen he would be on, or what Barnard was learning from his first (and unsuccessful) heart transplant. Barnard, perceiving Blaiberg as something other than an adult (Santa Claus, elfin), thought him complacent, and through some obscure intuition (but not by direct questioning), fearless. Not for him to explain the problem of organ rejection, infection, or other possible complications. Neither Blaiberg's nor Barnard's recollections, Katz notes, mention any other substantive discussion about the surgery.

Lest anyone think this encounter atypical, *The Silent World of Doctor and Patient* skillfully traces the deep roots of this medical style. Hippocrates instructed physicians to do their duties "calmly and adroitly, concealing most things from the patient while you are attending to him." A ninth-century physician, Isaac Israeli, counseled colleagues to "reassure the patient and declare his safety even though you may not be certain of it"; and Thomas Percival, in *Medical Ethics*, his widely read and often

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quoted 1803 tract, insisted that physicians not tell patients the truth because they "should be the minister of hope and comfort to the sick," not the messenger of "gloomy prognostications." Katz does cite an occasional dissenter, but he is convinced that the dominant voice belongs to the present-day surgeon who, impatient with the charge of medical paternalism, declared: "If 'father' did not know best, he ought to retire from practice."

Katz's purpose is not to refight truth-telling in medicine (along the lines, say, that Sissela Bok did in *Lying*), but to advocate an even more innovative course. He proposes that physicians share decision-making responsibility with patients, that they act as genuine partners in determining the diagnostic and therapeutic procedures to be followed.

Point by point he tries to counter doctors' objections. Patients are too ignorant or too frightened to help make decisions? Stop treating them as children and you may witness a remarkable change. The effort is unnecessary because doctors have an identity of interests with their patients? "The idea . . . is so patently untrue that one can only marvel at the fervor with which the notion has been defended." To share decision-making with patients would reduce the doctor's shaman-like ability to effect cures through the force of personality? The placebo effect has for too long been used "to hide diagnostic or therapeutic ignorance, to save doctors' time, or to make money." In short, concludes Katz, "we [must] discard the dangerous notion that the complexities of the physician-patient interactions can be resolved solely by trust in physicians' integrity, their compassion, and their commitment to the Golden Rule."

THAT'S NOT a notion that Curtis Pepper, a journalist who coincidentally collaborated with Christian Barnard on his autobiography, has any interest in laying aside. In fact, physicians' integrity, compassion, and commitment are at the heart of his book, in which he sets out to tell "the inspiring stories of people who conquered cancer and how they did it." In a series of short vignettes he reports the experiences of "ordinary people," who were "forced to fight the dragons and monsters of cancer." Pepper purports to celebrate their heroic behavior and subsequent victories over the disease, but in reality the exploits of the patients become a backdrop to highlight the dedication, skills, and courage of their physicians at New York's Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center.

The Memorial physicians are "super surgeons." The institution itself is a "remarkable creation," staffed by "dedicated men and women" who work "in an overall harmony as though the hospital itself was one living body, a healthy body casting off sick or diseased cells." In such an extraordinary setting, Pepper believes, patients appropriately trust their physicians completely and follow their advice faithfully. His ideal patient is at once submissive and grateful, anything but an alert consumer or a joint partner.

To fight the dragons of cancer, the patient does not require extensive understanding of his particular form of the disease, or a broad knowledge of possible treatments; he need not even give the doctor any idea of his personal values, of the sort of life he hopes to lead, so that together they can make decisions about the most appropriate treatment. Rather, Pepper's primary advice to his readers is to seek "the best," to "position yourself to get the best possible medical treatment in the shortest possible time."

PEPPER'S heroes may well be Katz's victims. Not only are they excluded from all aspects of medical decision-making, but they apologize profusely for saying anything that might upset the physician, or for hinting that he should have consulted them. One woman recalled that when she awoke after breast surgery, her surgeon told her, "I have good news, and I have bad news. . . . I took out twelve glands, and they were all negative—but I had to amputate your breast. . . . I looked at you and I said you are a very active woman and I did a different cut. . . . You can go low-cut, and you'll be beautiful." She replied: "Look, doctor, I'm not worried about low-cut. I'm a turtleneck girl, so you didn't have to worry about that. . . . I'm here for health reasons." She paused and then told Pepper: "That wasn't very nice of me. I could see it in his eyes. . . . I said, 'I'm sorry, I know you did a beautiful job. I'm grateful and really glad to be alive.'. . . He smiled and took my hand, and I felt he understood everything." That he might have discussed her preferences before surgery seems not to have occurred to her, to the physician, or to Pepper.

FOR ALL the passion with which Jay Katz seeks to redress the balance of power between doctor and patient, his book has a curiously conservative bent. It is an appeal to doctors, urging them to relinquish authority; Katz is not advising patients on how to assume it. Moreover, Katz makes medical school education his chief agent of change, which, given the traditional orientation of most curricula, is a little like expecting parochial schools to take the lead in teaching birth control. And in the tough cases, Katz hedges his argument. Take his fascinating analysis of the case of Mr. D., for example, admitted to a hospital with a high fever diagnosed on X-ray as generalized pneumonia. He was treated with three antibiotics, but when his condition worsened, his doctor wanted to perform two uncomfortable but not dangerous diagnostic procedures. Although Mr. D. was fully competent and had wanted treatment, he refused permission for the tests. His doctor, who reported on the case, unsuccessfully tried to get him to change his mind. Mr. D. subsequently refused to go on a respirator; and when asked if he wanted to be resuscitated in the event of cardiac arrest, he turned away from his physician and said: "We've been through this before; now leave me alone." Mr. D.'s heart soon did stop, and his physician did not attempt to resuscitate him.

Katz is dissatisfied with this sequence of events. Believing that there had been inadequate communication, he would have overridden the patient's objections. When Mr. D. turned away and asked to be left alone, he would have stayed to pursue the issues. Had Mr. D. continued to refuse discussion, Katz would have placed him on the respirator and resuscitated him, on the grounds that "there is too much that we both do not understand . . . and you must not hide behind silence." In taking this position, however, Katz is restoring a large measure of paternalistic authority to the physician. He gets to decide whether the patient's silence is reasonable or not; and should he find that it is not, he is free to resolve the crisis unilaterally. Katz places the physician in charge when the stakes are high and the situation acute.

More important, it is doubtful if such

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calls for change will be effective without a thoroughgoing and technical demarcation of where professional expertise properly leaves off and the autonomy of the patient begins. Should patients select their own antibiotic or analgesic? Should they help to decide whether they want broader coverage even if it brings a greater risk of side effects—or deeper relief even if it lowers blood pressure? Medical decision-making, it must be remembered, is constantly involved in trade-offs. What is dramatically apparent in the case of breast cancer is equally present in nearly every treatment choice. Hence pleas for partnership must delineate the rules under which it would operate.

ALL THESE considerations notwithstanding, Katz and Pepper may well have minimized the extent of the transformation already underway. Over the past two decades the balance of power between physician and patient has begun to shift to the patient, one symptom of which may be the extraordinary rise in malpractice suits. Although many of the causes of this change are still hidden, the fact of change is still indisputable. Thus, the scandals that marked human experimentation had their impact. If doctors and researchers could feed live hepatitus viruses to the institutionalized retarded or inject live cancer cells in hospitalized senile patients, then all patients had to break the medical silence and inquire about procedures. The Blaiberg-Barnard encounter would certainly happen differently today; consider the elaborate consent document that another heart patient, Barney Clark, signed. (It's odd that Katz does not make this connection, for he was among the half-dozen most important critics of medical researchers who violated the principles of informed consent.)

By the same token, the women's movement has reduced physicians' authority, particularly in obstetrics and gynecology. The feminists' historical as well as contemporary analyses made doctors' silence synonymous with male domination and called upon women to assert their prerogatives. Thus many breast cancer decisions also turn out differently today, not the least of the reasons being that publications like *Our Bodies, Ourselves* have educated women to exercise choice.

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tient is nowhere near as silent in the mid-1980s as it was in the mid-1950s. Indeed, there is mounting evidence that many physicians are responding to new demands. They are far more prepared to disclose diagnoses and to consult with patients about treatment decisions. Doctors and patients together are specifying not only the type but the extent of critical care or surgical interventions. The number of self-help groups that offer, with the assistance of physicians, both psychological support and hard information has expanded to cover practically every disease.

None of this means, of course, that the next time one enters an examining room or a hospital ward the physicians will automatically explain all the procedures, let alone invite participation in decision-making. They may not have the time, the inclination, the ability, or the training to do so. Still, for all the problems that remain, we are witnessing the start of a new chapter in the history of doctor-patient relationships, and it is a a chapter that is likely to fulfill many of Jay Katz's ideals.

DAVID J. ROTHMAN AND SHEILA M. ROTHMAN

David J. Rothman and Sheila M. Rothman, at the Center for the Study of Society and Medicine, Columbia University, are the authors of *The Willowbrook Wars: A Decade of Struggle for Social Justice* (Harper & Row).

SONS AND MOTHERS

Aracoeli
by Elsa Morante
translated by William Weaver

(Random House, 311 pp., $17.95)

In Italian literary circles during the 1960s, there were those who liked to dispute the reigning estimate, then generally favorable, of Alberto Moravia. They would say that his prose was less interesting than that of Elsa Morante, his former wife. Unquestionably Moravia made a contribution to Italian fictional writing, replacing the literary language of the 19th-century Italian novel with the idioms of 20th-century speech. Italians of this century always called horses "horses," while their writers of fiction referred to horses as "steeds." Breaking with all such deadening rhetoric, Moravia did for the literary language of Italy what Stendhal, more than a century before, had done for the literary language of France. He replaced romantically poeticized expressions with the more regularly used—and also the more sobering—terms for things. Moravia's influence on Italian writing lasted for more than two decades.

But after long sobriety one wants to go on a bender. When I was in Rome in 1962 and 1965, I heard much criticism of Moravia at literary parties. Some critics even accused him of having made the world seem much more prosaic than it actually is. Hadn't he cleaned up and modernized the language of the Italian novel? This, his critics were ready to admit, he had done. But after every revolution, they said, one longs for the ancien régime. Did they really want to go back to the kind of prose Moravia had delivered them from? Well, not really, not exactly. And it was at this point in literary discussions that critics would begin to praise the style of Elsa Morante.

I have not read Morante's first novel, which was so praised in Rome, but I have read her two subsequent works: *History: A Novel*, published in 1977, and *Aracoeli*. Morante's theme in *History: A Novel* is the significance for historically insignificant persons of the events of the Second World War. The scene at the start is Rome under fascism in 1941, a Rome at the mercy of the German secret police. There are remarkable scenes of Italians being rounded up by the police for deportation to German factories, where there was then a labor shortage; there are also scenes of Italian Jews being rounded up for deportation to the extermination camps of Eastern Europe.

The novel begins with an act of brutality: the rape of an Italian widow of Jewish origin by a bewildered half-drunken German soldier. It centers on the victim's efforts to raise the son, Giuseppe, born to her of this brutal mating. It has been said that we could all be happy if we could only select our parents and the historical period into which we were born. May we think that Giuseppe had any less choice of his parents or of the time of his birth than the rest of us had? Certainly not. But we are generally unaware of how much of our lives has been determined by the decisions of others, and we focus on our own lot with a very special poignancy as we read of the son forced on Ida Ramundo (she never even considers the possibility of abortion) in Rome during the Second World War. And the events that unfold are all the more moving because of the enthralling quality of Morante's prose. In *History: A Novel* Elsa Morante achieved genuinely poetic effects, while keeping for Italian fiction all the probity that Moravia had gained for it.

In *Aracoeli*, however, Morante has inflated her style. The language of the book is twisted toward an often recondite and generally unnecessary rhetorical forcefulness. Emmanuele, the protagonist, also the narrator of his story (and his mother's), is headed for El Almendral, the town in Spain where his father, an officer of the Italian Royal Navy, met his mother, a peasant girl. Here is how he describes his goal:

> [It is the] extreme stellar point of Genesis, breaking up the horizon of events, to swallow my every plot in its dizzying maws.

And he describes how his mother appeared to him as a child:

> When she brushes her hair from her face, baring her brows, she acquires a different physiognomy, of strange intelligence and unaware, congenital melancholy. Otherwise, hers is the intact physiognomy of nature: between trust and defense, curiosity and peevishness.

Sometimes he tries to excuse his dependence on rhetoric: " 'Eyes like a starry night' seems a literary phrase, but I can think of no other way to describe her eyes."

Like her protagonist, Morante is unable to leave literary phrases out of her descriptions and has filled her prose with the old rhetoric that Moravia's example forbade. Here is a typically inflated expression of Emmanuele on the

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subject of his mother:

> Once upon a time there was a mirror where, looking at myself, I could fall in love with myself; it was your eyes, Aracoeli, that crowned me king of beauty in their little bewitched pools. And this was the mirage that you fabricated for me at the beginning, projecting it on all my future Saharas, beyond your horrors and your death. Your body has dissolved, with no eyes now or milk or menstruation or saliva. It has been rejected by space, is nothing but a base raving; whereas I survive, white-haired Narcissus who will not die, misled by your mirages. Surely it was you who forbade me girls as an adult, jealous of them because they were fresh and beautiful, while you were no more than a livid ghost. And you instilled in me your envy and voluptuousness, until I was made your cheap performer. You condemned me to mime your motherly role, flinging me into the pursuit of one beardless Narcissus after another, following the usual mirage of your betrayed little boy, whom I had been.

THE subject of this novel is Emmanuele's subjection to his mother, and his love-hate for her, which has continued over the years long after her death. In fact the term love-hate is hardly adequate for a description of Emmanuele's feelings, which can perhaps be thought of as those of an outcast from life, or those of "a kiss born for nobody," if I may here use Mallarmé's wonderful expression. For Emmanuele's sexual relations with men as well as with women have all been disastrous, and according to him this is all the fault of Aracoeli.

The novel presents Emmanuele's case against his mother, and there is no fault found with his argument, except by inquisitors of his own invention. Nor does the author ever correct her protagonist. So we have a paean of the protagonist to his mother that is also a diatribe against her. She is held responsible for his homeliness, bourgeois status, homosexuality, and inability to idealize anyone but her. She is the one responsible for his many weaknesses.

Emmanuele's argument I find unbelievable, and what makes the logic of his complaint all the more suspect is the fact that he is thoroughly and irredeemably uninteresting. Take his accusation of his mother for having made him a homosexual. I have known homosexuals who also laid up their sexual predilections to their mothers' account, but they did this in a manner that showed a certain ingenuity and reflectiveness—even, in some, a sense of responsibility

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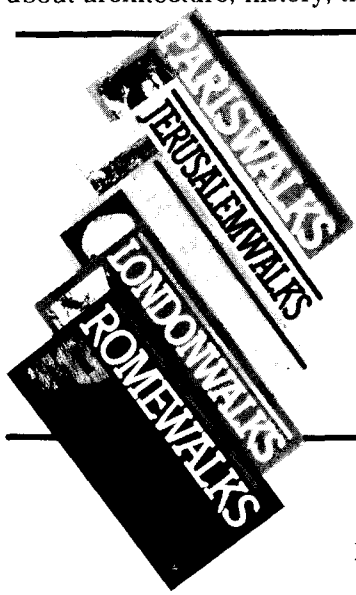

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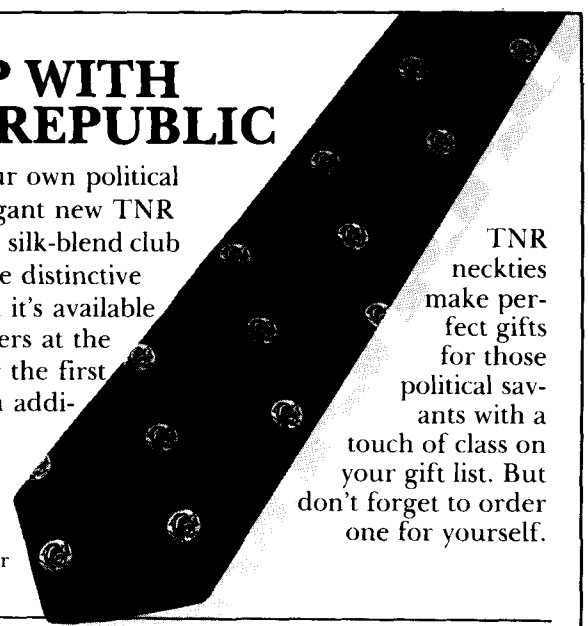

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that it is perhaps wrong of me to find surprising. For example, a homosexual once confided to me that he hoped to obtain from the men he allowed to dominate him the pleasure he assumed his mother had failed to obtain from his father, whom she had dominated. So evidently a male child may identify with his mother without being utterly destroyed by her. Not so Emmanuele, who tells us:

> No one can elude the birth sentence, which tears you from the uterus and at the same time glues you to the nipple.

If this were true, all the other stories we have heard of men and women, of parents and children, and all that we have read in the novels that have caught and held our attention would be quite false. I prefer to believe that it is Emmanuele and his creator, Elsa Morante, who are mistaken.

Are we to conclude that *Aracoeli* is just a construct based on Freudian clichés? One explanation for its dependence on Freudian notions is that such ideas have only just now been taken up by Italian writers. But this explanation does not at all jibe with the tones of genuine despair in this novel, which seem to me to have been deeply felt. And the climax of the novel, as Raymond Rosenthal perceptively noted in his review of *Aracoeli* for *The New York Times*, occurs when Emmanuele meets his mother's ghost: ". . . he tells her that he has sinned in his intellect because he never used it to understand." Her response is mocking laughter, for to her there is nothing in life, even in life as psychoanalyzed, to be understood.

Perhaps the frenetic rhetoric has been forced on the writer, who has shown herself capable of a more sober kind of prose, by sad experiences. There is a sense of chaos here that no writer would deliberately conjure up. Still, what Morante's turgidity does tell us is that despair, no matter how genuinely felt, can make one artificial. It probably takes a certain feeling of hopefulness, however modest or minute, to make us focus on what are actually our thoughts.

LIONEL ABEL

Lionel Abel is the author of *The Intellectual Follies* (Norton).

READY, AIM, THINK!

The Pentagon and the Art of War: The Question of Military Reform by Edward N. Luttwak

(Simon and Schuster, 338 pp., $17.95)

Over the last several years, the national defense debate has turned into a confrontation between three, rather than two, views. Two are familiar: the antidefense position and the pro-defense "give-the-generals-whatever-they-want" position. Proponents of both usually define themselves in terms of the budget. The former want to spend less for defense, the latter want to spend more.

The newcomers belong to the military reform movement. Their focus is not budget size, but military competence. The reformers argue that it matters little whether we increase the defense budget a few percent or cut it a few percent. The root cause of our military weakness—weakness manifested by our defeat in Vietnam, the debacle in the Iranian desert, our failure in Lebanon, and the fact that it took nine American battalions a whole week to defeat a few hundred Cuban construction workers on Grenada—is not lack of resources. The problem is that our military establishment has lost sight of the art of war.

Edward Luttwak's new book is a good introduction to some of the military reformers' views. After a lengthy introduction devoted to American military failures and Soviet military strength, the book makes its most important point: that the critical variables in war are almost all intangible. By focusing on waste, fraud, and abuse in the Pentagon, Luttwak argues, both the current system and its critics drive the defense debate toward trivialities. That stretches the point a bit; when fraud and abuse result in awarding contracts for weapons that won't work in combat, they seriously hurt military effectiveness. Still, the argument is basically correct. To win wars, we need an effective military, and effectiveness is different from efficiency. We could have, say, a very efficient horse cavalry division that bought its remounts cheaply and that had a good retention rate for its troopers, that filed voluminous reports on every aspect of its supply and financial systems, that saved money by contracting out to local farriers. Its effectiveness in stopping a Warsaw Pact attack in central Europe would still be zero.

LUTTWAK sees five intangible elements as central to the outcome of combat: strategy; organization (the appropriateness of the armed forces' structure to the modern battlefield); operational art and tactics (which subsume a basic military reform issue, the need for a style of warfare based on maneuver instead of firepower and attrition); and training. In addition he identifies three human variables: leadership, group cohesion, and individual morale. None of these can be measured numerically, and so none is subject to systems analysis. That means that in today's Defense Department (and the Congress) they receive little attention. But Luttwak is undoubtedly right; they are indeed central to success in war. If our military is deficient in them (and it is), the money we spend on defense will be wasted, because a military that cannot win is worthless.

Luttwak is also right when he says Congress is partly to blame for the current problems. The congressional defense review process increasingly resembles Japanese noh drama; the performance is elaborate, but the substance has been replaced by symbols. Even the most egregiously bad weapons, such as the Army's Bradley Fighting Vehicle, sail through unscathed. The factors Luttwak emphasizes are seldom mentioned in congressional hearings. Instead, members and their staffs spend countless hours looking for minor cases of financial mismanagement, or seeking to cut the budget by "program stretch-

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outs" that just raise total costs, or worse, by eliminating funds for less visible but badly needed ammunition, spare parts, war reserves, and training time.

Why have the services come to neglect the things that are so obviously central to the art of war? One reason, which Luttwak discusses at length, is that they have far too many officers above the company ranks. In 1945 the ratio of middle-rank officers to enlisted men was 1.3:100. By 1956, it stood at 4:100; by 1960, at 4.7:100. Thus, through the period in which our current military habits were formed we had a growing number of middle-grade officers sharing a given amount of work. The result, of course, was that the work was divided into ever-thinner slices, and officers lost sight of broader issues. By 1983, the ratio was even higher, 5.3:100.

At senior levels the problem was worse. At the end of World War II, we had 2,068 flag-rank officers and 10,795,755 enlisted personnel. Today, we have about 1,700,000 enlisted men, and we have 1,073 flag-rank officers. What do all these generals and admirals do? They get in each other's way, they push decisions to ever-higher (and more bureaucratic) levels, they succeed each other in the few desirable and useful jobs at such a rapid rate that few have time to become expert at anything other than office politics. Even simple decisions take endless meetings and memorandums. Moreover, they are usually made by committee consensus, which ensures that intra-institutional considerations will dominate concerns related to external effectiveness. In the drive to guarantee that all the rice bowls are filled—that every service, branch, and program gets its share, and that endless offices, headquarters, and programs have something to do—the art of war is ignored. Promotion reflects skills at political brokering, not combat ability. The art of the courtier has replaced the art of the combat leader, trainer, and tactician.

NOT ALL of Luttwak's criticisms, however, are on the mark. He argues that a major error of the Reagan defense program has been to emphasize the Navy, although the real threat, in a time of strategic parity, is the Soviet army. In reality, the United States is a maritime power, not a continental land power; geography says so. A maritime power does not seek to confront a continental power directly with its own armies, but rather with the armies of allies that it supports with naval power, with the financial power derived from trade, and in our case, with the awesome power of nuclear weapons.

The valid criticism of the administration's naval program is not that the resources should have been spent on land power, but that the ships we are building are basically useless. Thanks largely to the indefatigable Secretary of the Navy, John Lehman, the Navy continues to be built around a small number of large aircraft carriers. But the Soviet navy is primarily a submarine navy, and a very powerful one. It outnumbers us 3:1 in submarines. A carrier is not a threat to a submarine; it is a target. All Lehman's program will do is provide a couple more such targets, at the cost of tens of billions of dollars. Nor are the big carriers much use for the projection of military power; as Luttwak notes, even the largest of them carries only 34 attack aircraft, a small number even by Third World standards. The function of most of the carrier's air wing is simply to protect the carrier.

LUTTWAK does touch on the single most important fact about the Army: it is now sincerely endeavoring to reform itself, and it is the only service that is doing so. It has adopted maneuver warfare as doctrine; it is beginning to educate some staff officers in the art of war, not just in formats and procedures; it is trying to stabilize personnel in the combat units to create unit cohesion; it is putting some officers who are interested in the art of war into command positions. Yet the picture is not uniform. The Army continues to request poorly designed weapons, and the new light infantry division Luttwak cites as a sign of real progress so far looks like just more line infantry made light, a useless type of force best exemplified by the 82nd Airborne that did so poorly on Grenada.

If the Army's drive to reform itself continues, spreads, and succeeds, there will be a solid argument for giving it greater roles in our strategy. While in theory it is desirable to assign as many important missions as possible to the Navy and the Marines, since we are a maritime power, a reformed and effective Army will in practice be a more useful tool than an unreformed and ineffective Navy or Marine Corps. This is the point that Luttwak could have made for land power, since it is one that

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even the strongest proponent of a maritime strategy must acknowledge.

What is the solution to our institutionalized military ineptitude? Luttwak offers just one, although it is a very significant one. He proposes the replacement of the current Joint Staff/Unified Command system with an all-service general staff. A small, select group of officers would move from their services to a national defense staff, where they would become nonparochial experts in the art of war, and where they would make decisions based on national and military considerations, not the bureaucratic self-interest of their parent services. They would serve as advisers to the secretary of defense, bringing him the military judgment he cannot get from the committee consensus-seeking JCS; they would also act as commanders and operation planners wherever more than one service was involved.

There is no question that adopting a general staff system such as Luttwak outlines is an essential requirement for military effectiveness. The last major military victory we have had since the Joint Chiefs system was created was Inchon, and the chiefs opposed that. Rule by committee is antithetical to military excellence, because excellence demands boldness and hard choices, and committees can get consensus on neither. But it is not clear this single step would alone bring reform. Other steps need to be taken simultaneously. The size of the officer corps above the company grade level must be reduced by at least 50 percent. Maneuver warfare must not only be adopted as doctrine by our ground forces (the Marine Corps still has not even gotten that far), but institutionalized to the point where everything the service does supports it. Military education must be almost wholly revamped. Force structure must be altered, dramatically in the case of the Navy, which is fast becoming the world's largest and most expensive military museum. The way we define quality in equipment must be changed to emphasize tactical rather than technological quality. Until we develop forces that can win, we not only waste virtually all the money we spend on them. As Luttwak notes, we also risk a conventional debacle that could tempt us, under the pressure of crisis and failure, to turn to nuclear weapons.

WILLIAM S. LIND

William S. Lind is president of the Military Reform Institute and an adviser to Senator Gary Hart.

THE NEW REPUBLIC'S BEST BOOKS

Following is a list of books TNR *has recently reviewed and recommends.*

The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imam by Said Amir Arjomand (University of Chicago Press). An informative study of the relation between religion and state in Iran and Islam. (Reviewed 2/25/85)

The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers by T. J. Clark (Knopf). An original study of a decisive turning point in the history of art. (2/18/85)

For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America by Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski (The Free Press). A superb single-volume survey of American military policy. (2/11/85)

Equal Distance by Brad Leithauser (Knopf). An accomplished novel about Americans in Japan. (1/21/85)

White Noise by Don DeLillo (Viking). A novel of fear and trembling and technology in Middle America. (2/4/85)

The Willowbrook Wars: A Decade of Struggle for Social Justice by David J. Rothman and Sheila M. Rothman (Harper & Row). A chronicle of one case at the heart of the de-institutionalization controversy. (2/4/85)

The Second Industrial Divide: Possibilities for Prosperity by Michael J. Piore and Charles Sabel (Basic). An original account of an industrial turning point. (1/7&14/85)

The Intellectual Follies: A Memoir of the Literary Venture in New York and Paris by Lionel Abel (Norton). The life and times of the literary-political-Jewish intellectuals from 1930 onward. (2/11/85)

The Burn by Vassily Aksyonov (Random House). An epic portrait of the landscape of Soviet life. (12/31/84)

TRB, *from page 6*

managed to stroll unmolested into the family quarters of the White House.

The problem of protecting top officials is what conservatives would recognize in any other context as a paradigm of the limited possibilities of government. On the one hand, the goal of perfect security can never be achieved. It is always receding. On the other hand, every extra dollar you spend does enhance executive protection to some extent. It is not wasted. There is no ceiling on how much you can usefully spend, and there is no reason to stop spending at any particular point. In such a situation, who will be prepared to say, "enough"? And what will the person who said "enough" say the next time security turns out to have been insufficient? And inevitably, there will be a next time.

The Secret Service gets no praise for being reasonable. But it suffers humiliation and criticism each time its defenses are penetrated. This is a burden even the Pentagon needn't bear. (There will be no congressional hearings after *its* defenses are penetrated.) So at appropriation time, Secret Service officials go to Capitol Hill and quote from Vince Lombardi: "There is only one place in my game and that is first place." And it works.

By law, the Secret Service now protects the president and vice president and their families; former presidents for life and their spouses until they remarry (the Jackie O clause); former presidents' children until age 16; and "major" presidential and vice- presidential candidates and their spouses. They all get 24-hour, 365-day-a-year protection. At one point in 1983, Jimmy Carter was visiting England with a contingent of 12 Secret Service agents at the same time Michael Reagan was there with 19. Even Margaret Thatcher, whom the IRA keeps trying to blow up, probably doesn't have that kind of traveling party. No one is known to have homicidal designs on Michael Reagan, except maybe his stepmother.

Obviously the money doesn't matter if it helps to assure continuity of government and prevents nuts and zealots from thwarting the will of the people about who shall rule them. But why do we spend millions protecting *former* presidents and their families? The brutal truth is that even if Lady Bird Johnson's life were at risk, the functioning of democracy would not be at stake. Clearly the impetus at work is not entirely democratic. In fact, it's positively imperial.

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BOSTON DIARIST

Speeches Two

NOONTIME IN BOSTON. The beautiful colonnaded meeting hall in Fanueil Hall is quickly filling up with people. There's a pleasant, expectant buzz. Near the door, behind the camera stand, I find the advance guard of the national political press. The reporters, maybe a dozen in all, look rested but relieved to be back on the trail. They greet each other happily, and trade jokes with the numerous Boston pols in the room. Decent intervals are all very well in their place, but enough is enough. At long last, the 1988 campaign is getting off the ground.

AMID A RUSTLE OF AIDES, Gary Hart enters. He's applauded, introduced, applauded again, and then he gives his speech, which has been billed as "major." (Speeches are rarely billed as "minor.") For Hart, whom the election made into a front-runner, the speech is a first shot at defining that new Democratic "vision" everybody is supposed to be hungering for. He gets right into it. He proposes "a vision of a new idealism based on true patriotism." His themes are stern, even puritan. He calls for sacrifice, for hard work, for tough grading in school, for a national service program. Hart's eyebrows echo Webster's, and his hand-chops echo Kennedy's, but—for today at least—his politics echo Mather's.

HART IS OPERATING here at a very high level of abstraction, and his unvaryingly speechy delivery doesn't help. Though the buzzwords march by in well-organized ranks, there is still no real ideology to command them. And Hart's astringency has its limits. His prepared text demands "higher standards for teachers"; as spoken, this becomes "higher standards *and rewards* for teachers." (Those Iowa caucuses are going to be a bitch.) Also, the speech is studded with back-from-the-dead imagery: renew, reestablish, recapture, recreate, rededicate. But FDR never redid anything, he *did* things. The same with the Founders. "Don't retread on me" was not their slogan. With all its flaws, though, it was a serious, responsible, and intelligent speech. And in its pointed attack on materialism there was no trace of pandering to Yuppie self-absorption.

TWO DAYS LATER, another speech: the Head-Ducker's second-term kickoff State of the Union, as beautifully choreographed as a Busby Berkeley musical, and with a similar relationship to reality. Ronald Reagan in *Gold Diggers of 1985*. Actually, what depressed me about the speech wasn't so much anything Reagan said as the post-speech "analysis." Person after person appeared on the screen to say that (1) the guy sure is a great communicator, (2) you may not agree with him but he articulates a clear vision, and (3) the speech was "vintage Reagan." The repetitiveness of these comments, or commentoids, underscored an unpleasant fact of contemporary life: the degree to which the expansion of television news coverage has led to greater uniformity of opinion. In the 1950s, Ike would make a speech, a guy would come on and summarize the main points, and then it was back to "My Little Margie." (Or "G.E. Theater.") People had to decide for themselves what they thought about it. Now there are hours and hours of electronic "news" time. Most of the people filling this time have a strong interest in saying something cautious—ideally, something that sounds bright enough to obscure its utter vacuity. So the conventional thing is said not just once or twice, but over and over and over and over, until it bullies everything else out of existence. A huge industry is devoted to the production of opinion substitutes of standard size and flavor. The production workers include network anchormen, network correspondents, national hosts, local anchormen, local hosts, 24-hour cable news anchormen, Sunday chat show panelists, and radio call-in show hosts. The commentoids these people produce are like the blank blade cartridge that comes with a new razor—the same size, shape, and color as the real thing, but lacking the ability to cut.

IT WAS TYPICAL of Reagan's disrespect for his Republican predecessors that he chose to call his more-of-the-same program for 1985 a "Second American Revolution." The first Second American Revolution was proclaimed by Richard Nixon in his 1971 State of the Union, so Reagan's is properly the Third American Revolution. The '71 S.O.U. was one of Nixon's greatest, the one in which he referred to "the lift of a driving dream." (What a fingernail across the national blackboard that phrase was!) The speech was ridiculed at the time, but actually it isn't that bad. I've just been rereading it. We are at the climax of Nixon's Disraeli period. He sets forth six "great goals." One, welfare reform—a guaranteed minimum income. Two, an explicitly Keynesian full employment budget. "By spending as if we were *at* full employment, we will help to *bring about* full employment." Three, a massive environmental program, including a big expansion of the national parks system. Four, an ambitious health care program. Five, revenue sharing—the "centerpiece" of the speech, according to William Safire, and the only proposal in it that ended up getting enacted. (Reagan's new budget would scrap revenue sharing. A revolution is not a dinner party.) Six, a big federal government reorganization, saving the departments of State, Treasury, Defense, and Justice and folding the rest into four super-departments with names like Department of Community Development. Nixon called these six points his "New American Revolution." In 1971 a lot of people were talking semi-real revolution, and Nixon's awkward attempt at co-optation rang hollow. It seemed absurd to talk about a bunch of Republican government programs as a revolution. It not only seemed absurd, it was absurd. But imagine the same set of programs being seriously proposed now, even by a Democrat. That *would* be a revolution.

A LOT OF US had been wondering how Reagan was going to top Lenny Skutnik. We have our answer. Cadet Jean Nguyen was the perfect choice for the "Queen for a Day" segment of the speech. Her military bearing and her shy downcast eyes made an explosive combination. She was both utterly retro and totally up to date—tradition plus androgyny. Move over, Prince. And of course she is the perfect symbolic package for extirpating Vietnam guilt. Ronnie's guest next year: a black Cuban refugee who, because of the incentive of having his welfare cut off, went into business for himself as the owner of a chain of for-profit maternity clinics-cum-adoption agencies.

H.H.

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